

SPECIAL SERIES NO. 6



# HEARTH AND HOME ESSAYS

BY

ESTHER J. RUSKAY

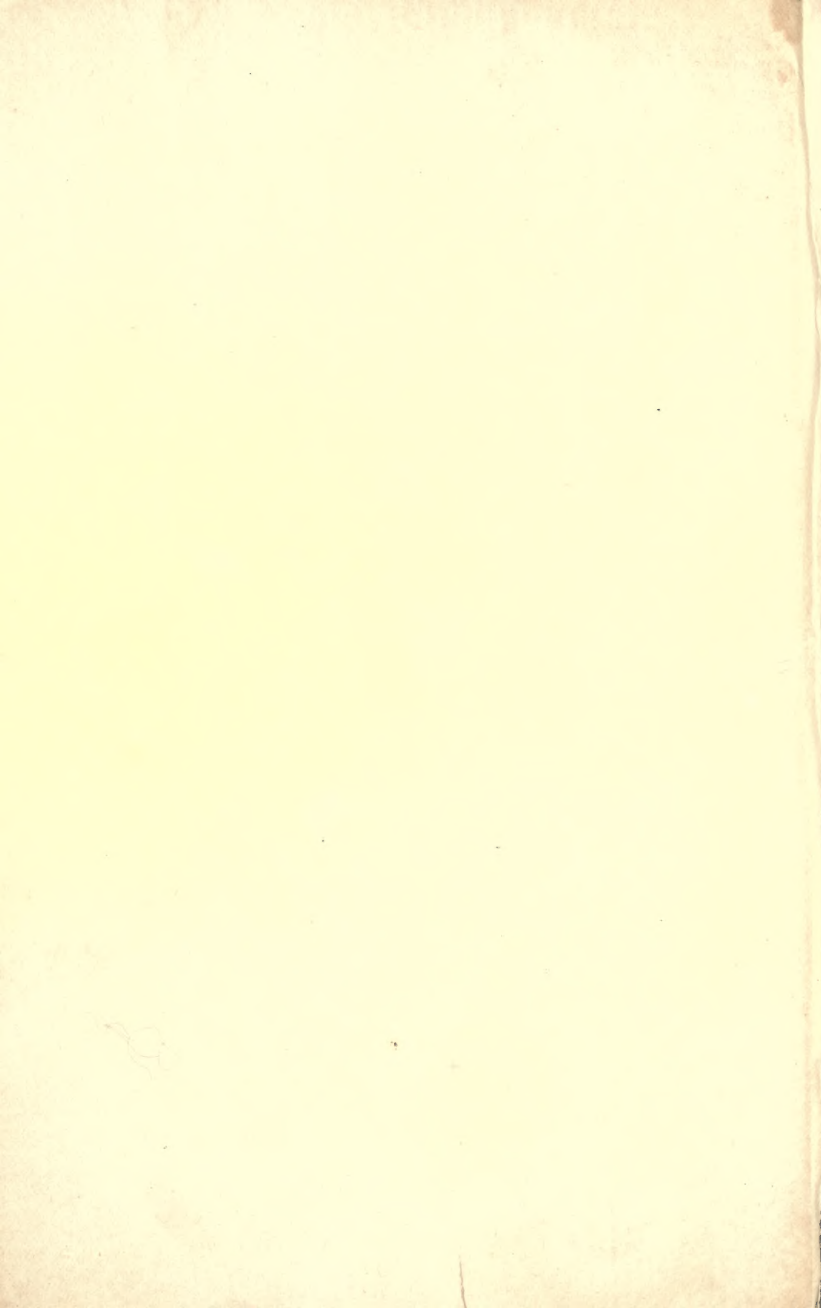


BM  
580  
R87  
1902  
c. 1  
ROBA

PHILADELPHIA

THE JEWISH PUBLICATION SOCIETY OF AMERICA

1902



Univ. of Toronto Libraries



HEARTH AND HOME  
ESSAYS



SPECIAL SERIES No. 6

# HEARTH AND HOME ESSAYS

BY

ESTHER J. RUSKAY



PHILADELPHIA

THE JEWISH PUBLICATION SOCIETY OF AMERICA

1902

COPYRIGHT, 1901, BY  
THE JEWISH PUBLICATION SOCIETY OF AMERICA





## CONTENTS

---

	PAGE
Sabbath Eve . . . . .	7
Sabbath and Character . . . . .	9
The Once-Upon-a-Time Gude Wife in Israel . . . . .	12
New Year in a Jewish Home . . . . .	16
New Year's Day . . . . .	21
Woman Infidels . . . . .	23
Atonement Day Thoughts . . . . .	27
Sukkoth . . . . .	29
Simchath Torah . . . . .	34
Unassimilative Jews . . . . .	37
A One-Time Background for Chanukkah . . . . .	42
Our Mothers . . . . .	47
Merry Purim . . . . .	50
Purim . . . . .	53
Intermarriage . . . . .	58
Preparations for Passover . . . . .	63
Passover Customs and Traditions . . . . .	66
An Ideal New Grandmother . . . . .	70
A Seder Party . . . . .	74
Pictures of Jewish Home Life . . . . .	80
Sobriety in Jewish Life . . . . .	92



## HEARTH AND HOME ESSAYS

---

### SABBATH EVE

THERE is a quality in the home atmosphere on Friday night which it would puzzle a scientist to define. Just what it is, whether it comes from the surrounding objects themselves, or whether it is only a reflection of the spirit of the inmates, there is no way of telling. Certain it is, though the house gets its regular overhauling and cleaning on every day of the week, at no time are the zest and purpose of the broom and duster so apparent as on the eve that ushers in the Sabbath. The candles have a softer glow and a brighter sparkle as they give back the light from mirror and woodwork. The cloth on the table would challenge the light overhead to reveal an untidy spot or careless crease. The very clock on the mantle ticks gently and sleepily, as who should say: "Rest, ye tired of earth; the week's work is over, and even I—tireless Time—find the scythe heavy and the labor dragging." Happy they who, when they leave the busy world of strife and turmoil behind them, cross the threshold of a Sabbath-keeping household. Close, close, and ever closer, the Sabbath peace embraces father, and mother, and children

in loving bond of mutual esteem and good-fellowship.

In how many families, but for the regular weekly Sabbath reunion, would the members drift apart, each becoming unconsciously alienated from the other, or, at least, losing the strong interest in and regard for one another's well-being which are the whole charm of family life. The Sabbath visit to the old home should never be omitted by children and grandchildren, while the old father and mother remain to bless with their impartial love and gentle, patient advice and admonition. "Father," "Mother"—how little we realize what the words mean, till we ourselves have merged our lives, our individualities, our very souls, into those of our children. And only when one by one, here and there, we note a familiar old presence gone, taken from our midst by the Great Reaper, and miss the quaint banter and homely wit, do we quicken our steps to the roof-tree under which dwell our precious beloved, whose pathways we would make smooth, whose days we would lengthen, in exact proportion as in the careless days of youth we overlooked, underestimated, and often neglected. An added glory the Sabbath eve with its restfulness and sparkle imparts to the white hair of age, and it falls with hopeful, regenerate purpose on the children who join honor of parents to honor of the Sabbath, making both synonymous with pleasant duty and joyous, unquestioning obedience.

## SABBATH AND CHARACTER

THERE are few men who dispute the need of one day out of seven for bodily and mental recuperation. But after the advantages of a Sabbath day have been conceded from every point of view, moral and economic as well as mental and physical, what has been gained? Concession is one thing, doing another. There is an enemy to fight, stronger than the most cogent reasoning, more powerful than the fear of death. Man's cupidity, his love of amassing wealth, is a factor that must be taken into consideration, and so long as it remains potent in his life, Sabbath-breaking must be reckoned among the sins and misdemeanors of mankind. Herein lies the distinction between men and men that makes the keeping of the Sabbath a matter for individual choice and seeking. There are those who rate worldly advantages higher than the advantages that accrue to them from sources not perceptible to the eye of man. Such fall naturally into the slough and treadmill of continual barter, selling their souls for a mess of pottage. Though such men have redeeming traits, and fill out their span of life in accordance with their own light, their lives, as a whole, are measured by the commoner standards, are moulded upon the lower ideals of worldly striving and worldly success.

To the other class belong the men who keep the heart true and the mind clear for the spiritual and

ethical aims of life, walking ever in the higher ways, oblivious of material things, unheeding the lures of fortune, the fascination of pride and power. They are the men whose abiding sense of God's law and God's love influences and ennoble and raises the thought standards of a community. They are the undercurrent, the powerful minority, who bear ever onward this little globe of ours towards its goal in creation's design. Such men as these, who keep the Sabbath, and make it a day of rest and benediction to their homes, rejoice in life, animate its higher councils, and keep ever before their vision the day of glorious fulfilment of God's promises to man, of the rest and peace hereafter.

"I will" holds as much of resolve and determination to-day as it ever did, and the man who starts out in life saying, "I will keep the Sabbath," is not apt to allow worldly considerations to interfere with his resolve. There may be difficulties in the way, obstacles to his advancement to position and power, but to such a man position and power mean very little. They become subordinate to an ideal, and are properly relegated to the same place in his temporal welfare occupied by overfine raiment or luxurious feasting. They are unnecessary to his soul culture, in his opinion the thing most to be desired, and, therefore, have no place in his thought or environment. Besides, the man who makes up his mind to keep the Sabbath will find obstacles gradually crumble away and vanish before the might of his purpose—will, moreover, find it an easy matter to regulate his affairs in accordance

with his desire for more spirituality in his life. Men who keep the Sabbath really have fewer wants. They start with a high aim, which precludes overmuch anxiety for the needs of the flesh, and where there is one such aim, there are apt to be more to keep it company. Say what we will about the respect tendered to wealth and position, it is not to be compared with the regard in which we hold men who have kept their souls on a high level of life and thought. We may doff our hats to the millionaire, and even be glad to be seen bowing to him, but not to him is accorded the shade of homage, quick and impulsive, that goes out to meet the man of unblemished soul, of high purpose, of spiritual ascendancy. He it is who really holds dominion over us, and commands our deepest love and reverence. Faith in God and striving to do His will seem to be indissolubly linked with man's highest conceptions of character. Seeking the one brings the other within reach, and the possession of both is needed for the perfect blending of physical and spiritual life.

## THE ONCE-UPON-A-TIME GUDE WIFE IN ISRAEL

OUR mothers of a generation or two back had a sort of primitive calendar by which they reckoned all events human, social, and religious. With the fragrance of June roses in the air and the memories of vernal Shabuoth hovering about, the Jewish "gude wife" gave herself up to something that resembled repose, but which might more properly be called a period of lying-in-wait with a watchful eye upon the quick passing of the long summer days. "In three months from now we have Rosh ha-Shanah, ten days later Yom Kippur, and five days thereafter Sukkoth. I must not be caught napping." Nor was she. With the spirit and perception of a woman who felt the importance of her individual relation to the great holiday season, she took time by the forelock, attending to the thousand and one details of household and personal adornment, the preparation for feasting and fasting that looked to her for their conception as well as completion. The period of New Year rejoicing, of Atonement prayer and penitence, of gathering in booths over and past, our "gude wife" heaved a sigh of content over duties fulfilled, and days well and justly honored, and betook herself to her knitting needles. Plying these busily, and while surmounting the difficulties of the heel, she was wont to observe as she changed needles, "Three months



from to-day we have Chanukkah," by which time, the pedal extremities of her husband and sons warmly encased in woolen socks of her own manufacture, her mental calendar sensed Purim, and with unerring accuracy told off the weeks intervening between Purim and Passover, or, as it was better known to her limited vocabulary, Pesach, feast of feasts, Israel's time of jubilee and national rejoicing. So, with the calendar always in evidence, round to Shabuoth again. To all of which she gave herself with no other hope of reward than that derived from the faithful observance of her venerated religion, asking of the Lord only the blessings of health and contentment upon her household, and His help in the uprearing to manhood and womanhood of reverential, observing sons and daughters of Israel.

Those were Judaism's benighted days, when there were no Sisterhoods or Councils for the religious salvation and regeneration of humanity in general and Jews in particular. Nothing but plain, humdrum people, who plodded along life's pathways, looking well after their own affairs, and too busy with the task to go outside of home in search of additional duties or more refined pleasures. Perhaps there weren't so many poor in those days, or perhaps more personal service and kindly oversight were given the poor within one's immediate province, struggling cousins of removed degree, those unconscious burdens of the modern fashionable household, or student children of less fortunate friends and brothers. Following the Law more

closely than we do, our predecessors may have grasped the idea of a Personal Service that started from the smooth running home, and radiated therefrom even into infinitude. At all events, whatever their grasp of humanitarian purpose, we moderns have long ago decided in our minds that those were bemuddled days for Israel, unintellectual, uncultured, unaspiring. We do not need any Jewish calendars. We go to temple and synagogue on the high holidays; our ministers keep us in mind of them, or if they don't, they ought to; and for the rest of that nonsense, about cleaning the house for Passover and special home observance of the—"O, 'er, we used to keep it when my grandfather was alive—the Seder? Yes, that's it—why, our houses are cleaned all the year round, and as for the antiquated ceremonial, we couldn't keep it if we wanted to, we don't know the first thing about it; in fact, between ourselves, if you won't tell anybody, we are not oversure of the historical events it is all supposed to commemorate."

Let us be thankful that, in spite of this quick speech, which would seemingly dismiss the subject with a few self-exculpating words, there is real love of Judaism springing up in our midst, a love growing stronger and stronger day after day, reaching out after that which has been lost, and asking, though as yet in faint, low whispers, for the beautiful home ceremonial, the life, and the inspiring traditions of Israel's once faithful children. Since happiness is the goal toward which all human effort tends, mankind is justified in striving to reach out after and grasp it. And if we have come to the

conclusion that it has been within reach through all the years of neglect and overlooking, that it is close to us, and we have only to put out our hands and draw it into our homes to make it a power and an incentive to well-doing, who shall say us nay? Adherence to the religion of our forefathers, loving observance of its commandments, must lay the foundation of innumerable happy Jewish homes, and beget for the Jew the respect and admiration to which, when he is true to himself, he is justly entitled.

That the home-keeping women of the past were happier than we who have beautiful homes, and leave their keeping for the most part to servants, there is not the slightest room for doubt. We may be more intellectual, we may have developed a keener relish for the problems that meet us at every turn; but if we will try to remember that we ourselves have helped to give birth to these very problems, through our intellectual forgetting, our overweening desire for worldly estate, our neglect of God and religion, all of which are unbecoming Israel as a missionary people, we shall find in our retracing that we have been going round in a circle, only to come back to the same point, as did the "gude wife" in her journey round the calendar—back to a life of simple, unquestioning obedience to higher laws than those made by men—laws upon which the laws of men are founded; back to a life of religion and humanitarian impulse, all centring in the home, going out and beyond it, to leave its trace in happy, helpful Jewish homes all over the land.

## NEW YEAR IN A JEWISH HOME

THE family is a large one, living in a large house, in the largest of American cities. There are so many of them—children and grandchildren, married sons and daughters, as well as single ones—so many relationships to keep in mind—aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews and cousins of all degrees—that it would seem no easy matter to get through a momentous occasion like this without trouble or friction of some kind. But it must be that this special season of holiness and prayer is too full of the law of love and lovingkindness to make unpleasantness of any sort possible, for certainly nothing of an unpleasant nature ever occurs to mar the festivity and joyousness of this great day.

As far back as the closing of school and with the first day of vacation, the preparation for the New Year really begins. Upon the piazzas of country houses, or seated under green trees, many quaint and useful articles are fashioned to answer as gifts for the various members of the family, as well as for near and dear friends. Sometimes a bit of lace held up by a Turkish Arab, displaying his wares on a hotel piazza, is eagerly purchased, and laid away in one corner of the trunk, to be sent with a New Year's card to a sister far removed from the city. Sometimes it is one of the sweet-smelling baskets of fragrant grass or a bit of wicker-work woven by

the hands of swarthy Indian women. It may be only a curious shell picked up in a walk along the beach or a bit of amateur photography. It is not the cost of the article, but the kindly spirit behind the giving, that tells. The many ideas exchanged and the plans laid, all have for their end the eve of Rosh ha-Shanah, the New Year, which generally falls somewhere around the opening of school. No matter what the season, or how lean the purse, some attempt will surely be made to keep up the family traditions of good cheer and mutual consideration. It is understood that each, from the youngest to the oldest, has done his or her best to meet the requirements of the day, so the size or the quality of the gifts is never criticised, or commented upon adversely.

The necessity for finding out the various needs of so many brings them all into very close communion, and keeps alive from year to year the strong, affectionate interest which is the pride and mainstay of Jewish family life. Inasmuch as the family is composed of, or rather subdivided into, many separate households, each with its own merry table, presided over by father and mother, it will be seen how busy the express company has been kept within the past week.

The floor, the sideboard, and the side tables hold such articles as are too large or bulky to be laid next to each one's plate. But smaller packages, containing table-linen, shirts, a smoking jacket, slippers, ties, gloves, a precious volume or two, all sorts of possible useful presents, find their in-

tended owners' places at table. Especially is this so of the head of the table. The two loaves of bread, under their embroidered cover, are completely lost to view. Indeed, so top heavy is the pile of bundles about father's plate that every now and then a smaller parcel is seen to be sliding down, coming perilously near the saucer of honey, into which, when the synagogue visitors have returned, and the New Year's inspiring Kiddush has been intoned, the new sweet apples are dipped, to be munched by everybody as a presage of the honey-sweet year to follow. And over it all the illumination of soft, glowing candle light, in every kind of silver, brass, and china receptacle; for some of the married daughters have, for the occasion, merged their families into that under the patriarchal roof-tree. Grandmother, who is still a very active lady, with a love for dainty finery, has donned her new lace cap with lilac ribbons, which sits so well on her smooth gray hair, and is fairly beaming with the joy of many duties and labors of the past year accomplished, to be, by the grace of God, crowned with the hope and joy of this coming one. In the far-off, by-gone years, when the present married sons and daughters of this household were children, it devolved almost entirely upon the elders to keep up the customs and traditions of the family. Now, the pleasant task and sweet duty of maintaining, teaching, and carrying out the beautiful religious laws of the household, are shared with the young, and it is the children's and grandchildren's constant prayer that

the old folks may live, the central power and guiding influence of the younger generations, for many years. This thought finds happy expression in the New Year's letter, full of good wishes, which is hidden beneath the plate at the head of the table, written by him who has the quickest and cleverest pen.

Sometimes the glance back into the year that has sped recalls the recent grief or sorrow that all have borne in silence. God imposes his burdens upon all equally, and it is the cheerful spirit with which they are borne that marks out the true hero or heroine in life's battle. For years, the honor of writing this New Year's letter has fallen upon one, but in recent years a poetic vein has been struck where least expected, and the drollest bits of verse are the new-find's annual contribution. Another, whose narrow purse renders it impossible for her to carry out her munificent intentions, makes up for her inability by writing out in comical vein what she would have done to satisfy each member of the family (playing, of course, on her knowledge of their most extravagant yearnings and desires), if Fate had seen fit to fill her depleted exchequer. Even here the will is taken for the deed.

Later, when the gravy bowls are empty, and the Shir ha-Maaloth and the Benshen (grace) are sung and intoned by the entire family, bass, alto, and soprano come in at the finish on the National Hymn of America and in Hebrew, too.

Grandfather will be seen to be tired, in spite of his assertions to the contrary. And well may he

be, for has he not, during the past two weeks, ridden far and wide through the city's outlying districts, hunting up Jewish derelicts, and seeking to interest them in the formation of a little community, whose first task shall be the establishment of a synagogue? Did he not that very day, after the last finishing touches had been given to the white satin curtain, with a star in gilt braid outlined upon it, that hides the Aron ha-Kodesh in the new synagogue, did he not ride all the way into town, carrying back in his arms, *via* Elevated, and stage, and long dusty roads, the precious Scroll of the Law, the Torah, bequeathed to him by his aged father, and, until now, kept in the ark of the old synagogue in which his family have worshipped for years? Verily, the fire that burns within must be bright to make possible to his weakening powers so difficult a physical undertaking. But it is this selfsame power within the loyal Jewish breast, a fire enkindling and vitalizing, that wages eternal battle for the ideals of Judaism, carrying them and the ark, which is their resting-place, wheresoever the Jew tarries, be it for an hour, a day, or a lifetime.

“How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! Thy tabernacles, O Israel!” Graceful spires and gilded domes lift their heads proudly to the sky, attesting the Jew's loyalty to the God of Israel. Pray God that on this day the hearts of the worshippers within may be filled with holy zeal and love for their mission to the world, for which they have been welded together, and kept intact as a nation.



## NEW YEAR'S DAY

ROSH HA-SHANAH! Great, joyous day that ushers in the New Year! Time's annual starting-point of onward movement for the entire universe. The day on which, according to Jewish tradition, the Books are opened to inscribe upon their pages life and sustenance, sorrow and joy, health and sickness, for each human being, according to the will of an all-wise, all-seeing, omnipotent Father. Let us pause and think of it, we whose love for free thought, untrammled and unrestrained by any agency, leads us to prefer not to humble ourselves in prayer before the Almighty, either on this day of Rosh ha-Shanah or any other day. Think how helpless, for all our intellectual striving and insistence upon the sublime ego, we really are before the Power which orders our lives always for good, even though it seem to the rebellious spirit otherwise. For God is truly a God of love, ruling, tireless, and patient, above the forces of nature which He has created, yet because of nature's immutable laws, which must not be suspended for the individual, making man's fate dependent upon himself, upon his own sinning against nature's laws. If we would but remember when our prayers ascend to Him from temples and synagogues, that God is our friend, loving us, reaching out to us for the best that is in us, asking of us only that we be true to Him, and run not counter to the laws which

He has laid down for man in conformity with those laid down for nature, we would place ourselves on the road to a fuller comprehension of problems that seem to many of us hopeless and unsolvable. And this is faith—to believe that man created in the image of his Maker is not an irresponsible factor in the creative design; that his soul is in his own hands to strengthen and uplift; in himself the power to restrain passions of greed and lust, as well as to hold the reckless, soaring intellect in check, making it teachable and subservient to the omnipotent mind and ruling of the Universal Father.

## WOMAN INFIDELS

"A little learning is a dangerous thing;  
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring;  
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,  
While drinking largely sobers us again."

Two or three decades ago, a Jewish woman openly confessing ignorance of her religion or expressing herself as altogether lacking religious convictions would have been looked upon as a monstrosity or, at best, an eccentric being whose acquaintance should be tabooed. Nowadays it is not an uncommon incident to hear Jewesses unhesitatingly proclaim their agnosticism, oftener their utter infidelity. Sometimes it is a young woman, with life still all before her, who makes the assertion that she does not believe in God, or the Bible, or any of the things her mother was taught to believe and hold sacred. Sometimes it is an older woman, whose religious education has been neglected, causing her to dabble in that scientific literature which makes evolution responsible for all the problems of the universe. In the case of the younger woman, consistency of religious convictions is met by some such speech as this: "Now, really, I don't see how any one with any kind of an intellect or of average intelligence can allow her mind to run in the same old grooves day in, day out. Why, I couldn't bear to have myself hampered, and my life cramped, by laws and religious doctrines and dogmas, made by men who

never could have known my needs or the needs of my time." Wise young woman, whose knowledge of the world and all human nature has simmered itself down to "I," "my needs," "my time."

Youth is truly splendid in its egotism, sometimes even inspiring. But what a wide range of folly is given to young minds that have not been taught to regard the achievements of the past with the same respect as we shall one day require for our age at the hands of posterity. Not to be too set and sure about oneself or one's age is one of the wise behests that may with benefit be impressed upon the young. Also, that our little world revolving about the sun is the same orb that was launched into space millions upon millions of years ago, and that the human beings who feed, and live, and die upon its pastures, differ in no way from one another, save in the added centuries of time that bring to each either light or darkness, civilization or lack of civilization, according to the Divine Power That rules over all, and Whose design for the ultimate good of humanity is evident only to those who firmly believe in His love and justice.

The older woman, who has soared into the illimitable space of thought (that leads to nothingness and nowhere), will deliver herself somewhat after this fashion: "My dear, if you had ever read anything, or thought deeply upon these matters, as I have, you would know how impossible it is to believe in any one God, personal or impersonal. Why, try to grasp it as I put it to you. Can you conceive of a Will, or Power, or Being, so great, so wonder-

ful, so mighty as to control the universe; not merely our little planetary earth, mind you, but the universe with its systems upon systems of solar and stellar worlds, beyond, far beyond human sight and reach? And even if you could conceive such a Power, can you think that such a mind would lend itself to watchfulness and guidance of the actions and thoughts of tiny human beings, mere earthworms in the great creative idea? Now, really, my dear, *can* you conceive it?" And in the broad, sweeping scope of the question, the earthworm with religious convictions hears sounded that other note of the school of doubt which would annihilate the human ego altogether. Recalling her own personal transition period from doubt and unbelief to voluntary rendering up of the spirit to submission to and faith in God, she answers humbly enough: "No, I cannot. And it is just because my mind cannot conceive it, because it is altogether beyond the understanding of man to grasp the omnipotent force behind all other forces, that I believe in a Power beyond human ken, which man calls God. How can we, who stand dazed and helpless before the mere problems of time and space, hope to grasp more than faintly and in childish, dependent faith that Being

"Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,  
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,  
Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,  
And now a bubble burst, and now a world."

The most scientific minds of every age (notably our own Darwin, than whom none was ever more searching and earnest) have a way of returning

from the quest into "the unknowable" baffled and humbled into some semblance of human faith. It may well be put to question, then, which class of human beings make most for righteousness, they who soar perpetually into the unfathomable reaches of the unknown, or they who, recognizing their little world to be bounded by human vision and governed by laws that men have evolved from some divine source, conform their lives to sane, orderly, healthful precept, giving their best activities rather to the workaday world of pain and striving than to launching unprofitable wisdom at the stars.

## ATONEMENT DAY THOUGHTS

IT MAY be that in the struggle for existence and the rush of daily toil many forget the season of mutual forgiveness and reconciliation, of "making up" between friends, and general good feeling, before the year begins in earnest. Is there a one-time friend whose friendship has been lost through a quick word spoken in a moment of impatience and thoughtlessness? Go to your friend. Don't question who was right or wrong in the matter, just go. And when you stand face to face with him, don't halt, or falter, or wish yourself back home again. Say, "I am sorry for that which has come between us. It was altogether my fault, the fault of my hasty, unreasonable temper. I have come to ask your pardon and forgiveness and to be restored to your friendship." It may be, though it is not at all likely, that your friend is not in a forgiving mood. But it does not matter. Do your duty, and bide the time when the spirit of fairness will compel a recognition of your good intention. Try it once, and you will be surprised at the love and peace that will spring up all about you and at the lasting influence for good it will have on your own life and the lives of others.

It was a beautiful custom among the Jews that sent the children to the grandparents to be blessed on the eve of Yom Kippur. Very trembling and

weak were the aged hands that rested upon the bowed head of youth, and often the tears that bedewed the seamed and gentle old faces brought answering dimness to the bright eyes of childhood. For, had not these tears their source in devout souls, who knew their days to be numbered and in the hands of Him Who granteth life and death? It might be that before the next recurrence of this day of fasting and prayer the fiat of parting would go forth, and the eyes now gazing fondly on children and grandchildren would be closed forever. Truly, the great Day of Atonement lost nothing of its sacred importance nor the home of its sanctity by this custom which brought the heart of childhood close to the brooding tenderness of old age, and sent the children back into the world, softened by the contact, with minds attuned to ideas of affectionate duty and veneration.



## SUKKOTH

THE custom of building booths to commemorate the ingathering of the harvest is too pretty a one and too full of object-lessons for the young to allow it to fall entirely into disuse. Many of our congregations still make use of the space back of the vestry-rooms or in the courts surrounding their edifices to put up these temporary little out-buildings, all walls and no roof except for the green boughs and branches. The prize scholars and best children of the Sunday-school may well compete for the honor of bringing the finest fruits of the season—citrons, pears, apples, and royal clusters of grapes; of tying and suspending them from the overhanging branches; may scour the parks and suburbs for autumn leaves and foliage with which to decorate their synagogue booths.

Far back in the ages, troops of rosy-cheeked children like our own, dressed a little differently perhaps, climbed the hills surrounding Jerusalem to gather the fruit of the vine, or searched the green outlying lowlands beyond the Holy City for branches with which to deck whole encampments of these tiny booths. For in those days the least of God's commands were followed in love and with grateful outpourings of religious enthusiasm. Entire families dwelt within these booths, as to-day many families dwell in tents and camps in the mountains or at the seashore. Love of nature and

a wish to abandon themselves to the joys of outdoor life, had as much charm possibly for our ancestors as it has for us. And when we realize that this love was combined with a sense of God's goodness and deep gratitude for abundance of cereals, for the fruits of trees, and for the vine, figs, dates, pomegranates, grapes, and olives; that all these were tended in their growth, and watched in their gleaning and gathering, we can begin to understand the light-hearted joy and pleasure with which our farming ancestry, the Jews of ancient days and their freedom-loving children, built these booths, and dwelt in them.

We live in cities, penned in by close rows of houses, and can commemorate those days only by thinking of God's commandment in the Bible, "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths; that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." Many years ago, however, the Jews of our city used to vie with each other as to the beauty and decorations of their Sukkoth booths. Some of these were even built to last the year round. I remember one, a spacious conservatory with a roof that could be turned back to allow the temporary covering for a Sukkah. The long French windows of the back parlor led into this conservatory, which in the winter was filled with tropical bloom and fragrance; and a dumb-waiter connected it with the kitchen downstairs, so that the master and mistress of the house with

their sons and daughters dined most luxuriously in the open air, with all the conveniences and appliances of modern comfort within reach. Another Jewish gentleman, desiring to separate himself for this one week from civilization altogether, built a perfect gem of a booth in the back of the garden, as far away from his house as he could get. The windows were of stained glass with lower sash curtains; the floor of mosaic, and the chandelier of glass prisms. The most fragrant branches composed the temporary roof—the real one was constructed upon hinges, so that it could be turned back—and the long approach to the booth was by a most beautiful grape arbor. Rich as these men were, and accustomed to luxurious living, they did not scorn to send out invitations to such of their Jewish friends and neighbors as were unable to build booths for themselves; neither did they forget to invite a wretchedly poor foreigner, met at the synagogue, to be their guest and to sit at their table, to be served as though he were a prince. For, are not all men, rich and poor alike, brethren, and is not that the highest truth which our religion teaches us? Similar courtesies were extended by the wives of these men, so that it was not an uncommon occurrence to have an extraordinary illumination in the booth through the invitation to their Jewish sisters to light and bless their festival-candles in the booths, and to hear their respective husbands recite the blessing over the wine and fruit. Those were happy, sociable days for Israel. Jewish men and women were

brethren then in the true sense of the word, because they were animated by the true spirit of their religion. Now we are so conscious of ourselves, so prim, and always on our good behavior before our neighbors, that we have quite forgotten the gentle manners and lovely customs of an old-fashioned Judaism. Some day we shall care less about our neighbors. But until then let us enjoy the booths we have behind the synagogue, and make our teachers tell us all about them and the custom of blessing the Lulav made of palm, myrtle, and willow, and the citron. Should anybody tell you that all this is nonsense and superstition, ask him if the Yule-tide and the Yule-log of the Saxons are nonsense; if the Christmas tree of the Christians is nonsense; if all poetry, and music, and beautiful uplifting thoughts are nonsense. No; nothing that elevates the human soul and softens the human heart, whether it be the simple melody of a *Volkslied* or the greater harmony of a nation's festival song, nothing of all this is other than good, and true, and beautiful.

Now a word as to our relations with our neighbors. Our neighbors, as a rule, even if they do not believe as we do, are much better acquainted with their Bibles than we are, and never think of casting ridicule upon customs based upon Bible traditions or upon the religious life of an entire race. In the years I speak about, yes, and even to-day, many a neighborly visit and many a cheerful cup of tea have been enjoyed by neighbors of different faiths under the Sukkah boughs. It all

comes under the lesson of self-respect which we have need to learn. Know yourselves ; be true to yourselves. Know the history of your race ; love your religion and its beautiful ennobling traditions ; carry out faithfully and lovingly such commandments as can be carried out, and never worry but that your neighbor, or your friend of whatever order of mind, will pay you full due of neighborly kindness and friendship, and accord you the highest measure of respect and admiration for your consistent attitude as a Jew and your loyalty and devotion to the religion of your ancestors.

## SIMCHATH TORAH

SIMCHATH TORAH—"Rejoicing in the Law"—brings to a close the Jewish autumn holidays. It may possibly receive slight attention at the hands of the new generation of men and women, who have grown up in an atmosphere of careless observance of Jewish Law. But there are still many who know that the closing chapters of the Pentateuch have been reached after the year's readings, and who go to the synagogue to witness the joyful ceremonies attendant upon the last perusal. It is on this day that the procession forms headed by the minister or cantor, chanting songs of praise, and followed by the president, the vice-president, the trustees, and the phalanx of solid men of the synagogue. How carefully and lovingly each great Scroll of the Law has been lifted from the Ark, and borne in the arms of the holder, to its place in the procession that is forming! It is an unusual procession and allowable only on this day of Simchath Torah—Rejoicing in the Law—our Law.

What do those two words mean, and why is the possessive pronoun "our" used? Because it is the Law that was given to Israel on Mount Sinai, and that has since helped to civilize the entire world. It is the Law that has kept our people a clean and pure race, holding before the world the highest ideals of Divine love and of a loving, helpful, human brotherhood. If we knew the Law as we should

know it, we would not wonder that all the thoughtful, earnest men in the synagogue bend forward to touch reverently with a corner of their Talith the Scrolls in the passing procession, and then lift that portion of the Talith to their lips. They have been taught in their youth to love and revere the Law, and their children unconsciously imbibe something of their feeling so that they, too, stretch forth their little arms to touch the shimmering white satin or rich ruby velvet covering, through the top of which rise chaste silver ornaments and little silver bells, making a pleasing sound as they pass. Our children are taught to recite: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One" in Sunday-schools and on extra occasions, but we can have no idea how differently and with what fuller meaning these words enter the mind and heart, when the Law is elevated high above the heads of the congregation, and all in answering praise chant: "Thine, O Lord, are the greatness, power, glory, victory, and majesty." I have recently heard that the Scroll of the Law in one of our temples is kept behind a door, which is at the mercy of a mysterious electric button, hidden somewhere in the architecture. When that is pressed, the door gradually and mysteriously rises to afford a glimpse of the Scroll, then down it goes again. How very funny it must all seem to the congregation looking on. Surely, that perfectly lettered and easily understood Torah, our Book of Life and Law and Reason and Science combined, was never intended to be so estranged from the

people to whom it was entrusted. It has been our friend and comfort in sorrow, as well as our sublimest stay and support in the awful days of persecution; and is this its reward, that it shall be as an alien and a stranger in our midst, to be looked upon from afar, and wondered at, and in time lost out of the individual life of the untaught Jew and Jewess? No, we are being taught in many ways outside of the synagogue to love and esteem our great Book, as it has been loved and esteemed for countless ages, our pride, our joy, our heritage, and we shall learn some day to rejoice in it as our fathers rejoiced in it. Then we shall gather it close to our hearts, and bring it from behind closed doors to elevate it above the congregation of the world, and all men of all nations and all creeds shall join with us in our rejoicing and proclaim to the heavens: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is One. Blessed be the name of His glory forever and ever."



## UNASSIMILATIVE JEWS

VERY soon in the Sunday-school the Chanukkah lights will have been kindled, will burn low, and become extinguished in their sockets. The children will have sung the Chanukkah hymn, will have listened to the story of the Maccabees, will have eaten their ice-cream. Then—what? Back into the family circle, where shopping expeditions for the purchase of Christmas gifts and the furtherance of Christmas joys are in order; where preparations for Christmas eve jollifications, the welcome of Santa Claus, and family rejoicing around the Christmas tree, give a zest to life that all the Chanukkah hymns in the world, backed by all the Sunday-school teaching and half-hearted ministerial chiding, must forever fail to give. For these latter are only incidents in a child's life, while his home is the cradle and incentive of all his joys, the one spot towards which his hopes inevitably tend, to which his heart will always cling. We are guilty of irreparable folly when we bound the religious training of our children by the portals of temple and Sunday-school, and outside these restricting lines give free reign to our children's desires, their whims and caprices.

The president of one of our synagogues, a man who subscribes liberally each year to the maintenance of one of our largest and best-attended Sunday-schools, said recently: "Of what use is it

all—the prizes, the lectures, the little Hebrew, the smattering of Bible history? All the work here of officers and teachers is rendered null and void by the irreligious attitude of the parents, the lack of Jewish devotion and religious training at home. What I received from my father and mother, in spite of their lives of toil and hardship, I would not sell for the value of every religious building in this city. It has made life more than worth living, and it is the one thing that makes me persist in and keep to my labors here.”

“That’s all nonsense,” spoke up a good-natured, easy-going modern. “Those were different times altogether. Your parents were, like mine, good, plain, old-fashioned Jewish people, who wished for nothing better than their homes and the religious training of their children. Outside of these, they cared for nothing, absolutely nothing.”

Profound student of life, this Epicurean friend of ours! As if this age or any other had evolved, or could evolve, any higher ideal than the Jewish one of the maintenance of the purity and sanctity of home, the religious and ethical training of the young. It is all in a line with that superficiality of utterance and reasoning, as arrogant in its assumption of superiority as its results are injurious to the children we rear up to be our representatives in the world. Our children are compelled to bear the impress of this very lack of home culture and home religious training, which we so admire in our friends of alien faiths; a culture which past generations of Jews, in spite of their lack of worldly advantages,

found it no difficult matter to attain, either for themselves or for their children. On the very steps leading from a Jewish Sunday-school, two little girls were last year heard excitedly debating the merits of their respective Christmas trees, which, in all their glorious panoply of gilt balls and tinsel, occupied the places of honor in their home sanctuaries, while they, the children, were supposed to be imbibing spiritual teachings as well as Jewish Biblical history in the Sunday-school to which they were dutifully despatched each Sunday morning. Ask the average Jewish parents why they allow Christmas to be celebrated in their home ; why they abet and sanction every effort of their children to fly their own folds, and they will return you the regulation, stereotyped answer, typical of men and women whose lives of ease and prosperity have blinded them to everything but ephemeral worldly pleasures :

“O, we are not so stiff-necked as our fathers were ; neither so narrow nor so bigoted as to withdraw ourselves from the world about us. We must assimilate in spirit, at least, with our neighbors. To exclude ourselves and our children from the general manifestations of Christian good-fellowship and Christmas good-cheer would be the veriest injustice to them. Far more wise we deem it to let them have a Christmas tree and all the rest of it, to which they can invite their Christian companions as well as their little Jewish friends and neighbors.”

All this as justification to a curious, inquiring

world. Down in the darkness of their own souls, where still flicker a few Jewish embers, whose light will not die, rises ever and again, in spite of themselves, the spectre of Jewish consistency and self-respect, whose relentless eyes of warning make it the grim Banquo at the feast. But only for a moment, then back to the shopping-list: "A crescent and star bracelet for Hannah, an oyster set for Aunt Sarah, a card-table for papa, a gold-headed cane for Uncle Simon, a cheap dress-pattern for the cook," etc.

"What kind of people are those?" questions a Christian neighbor, referring to just such a family. "They look like Jews, and I do not see them go to any church, but at Christmas they sent us just the loveliest presents—and such a tree as they had!"

"They are not Jews, whatever they look!" was the reply. Nor were they. Men and women who aspire to assimilation with their neighbors, and start out with disloyalty to their own religion, become justly a mark of opprobrium to their own race, and receive scant courtesy at the hands of those whose favor they would curry. Theirs is an ignorance of racial proprieties and ill-breeding so rank, so utterly un-American, not to say un-Jewish, as must always place them beyond the pale of civilized notice. Jewish men and women, moreover, who cannot find room for rejoicing, for family reunions, and for the presentation of gifts during the year, on noble Jewish festivals, like Chanukkah, Rosh ha-Shanah, Passover, Purim, Sukkoth, and Shabuoth, do not deserve to be called Jews. Far

from being, as they assume themselves to be, tolerant and broad in their assimilative tendencies, they are, alike to Jews, their supposed brethren, and to Gentiles, their much-sought brethren, a portion of our race forever to be discountenanced, condemned, and despised.

## A ONE-TIME BACKGROUND FOR CHANUKKAH

A BROAD, roomy kitchen of a sort not found in modern houses. Half of the wall on one side is taken up by a quaint, old-fashioned bake-oven; the remaining space is filled by a large sized modern range. Around the open grate hang long-handled shovels and pokers, and above, on a shelf, rests the coffee-roaster, a cylinder of sheet iron, which, turned by the children once a week, sends a delicious fragrance of roasting beans through the house. Opposite, with a good stretch of white flooring between, rises the huge kitchen dresser. Eight shallow drawers support the weight of the shelves, which, starting very near the floor and reaching to the ceiling, are resplendent with brass, copper, and china of every description. The glass doors of the dresser reflect the light from the open grate and the children toasting themselves on the hearthstone before the fire.

A great oblong slab is this hearthstone, with low stools and settees in different stages of repair surrounding it. Bridget, the servant of fifteen years' standing, has just put away the supper dishes, and, after hanging up the last dish-towel, turns and makes a dash for the hearth. "Up wid yez, childer; the Grandmother wants the kitchen to-night to make Chanukkah candles." Before they can demur, she has seized, first one pink-toed

youngster, then another, and borne them off in triumph, one under each arm, up-stairs, where, after tucking them into bed, she listens to them lisp the "Shema Yisrael," prompting the sleepy voices and demanding repetition when the familiar words do not sound correct to her devout Catholic ear.

Meanwhile the aspect of the kitchen has changed. Grandmother, with three or four old friends, has taken possession. All of them have been well-tryed in life's furnace, and have issued therefrom dim as to vision, but clear as to soul; a little strict perhaps in their religious demands upon themselves and the younger people, but full of zeal and love for their faith—so full, indeed, that each day is measured only by the number of good deeds it can hold, of service to the needy and destitute, of ministering to the sick and dying.

Upon a side table lie many balls of soft, white twine, which the older boys and girls are twisting into regular lengths, while Grandmother and her cheerful, garrulous friends break the big round cakes of hard yellow wax into small pieces. Later the children help to warm these pieces before the fire, after which, with the length of the kitchen stretching between, they hold the ends of the twine, keeping it taut and stiff while the experienced elders roll the lumps of wax about the twine.

Very gently the aged palms work, and mould the wax that must be free from flaws and impurities, for were not the Maccabees and their victorious hosts careful, before dedicating the Temple,

which had been spoiled by the Syrians, that only the purest oil should be used to celebrate their victory? And when the twine is covered evenly and smoothly along its whole polished yellow length, clip, clip, clip, go the scissors next to the yardstick measured against the thin golden line, and clip, clip, again into smaller and still smaller sizes, after which the young people gather them together in even heaps, tying them into neat bundles of forty-four, which bundles are subsequently to be presented to friends far and near for the home celebration of Chanukkah.

About this time, too, the children, climbing upon the back fence at the risk of their necks to get a peep into the workshop, discover Grandfather in an important and what seems to them a dangerous rôle. He is bending over a crucible suspended over a bed of coals in the charcoal burner, in which crucible is some lead undergoing the process of melting. Like the wizard in the fairy tales he looks as he stirs and stirs the hot boiling lead, his white hair, and long white beard, and black skull-cap surrounding a face seamed deep with lines and wrinkles. And how carefully he handles those funny sticks, in the centre of which he has carved portions of a Hebrew letter! When the pieces are securely tied together, it will be seen that they are only portions of an old broom handle, hollowed out in the centre in the form of a tiny top. Down into this hollow gurgles the hot melted liquid, filling out each crevice and line of the carving, till the hollow is full, after which it is placed where it can undergo the process of cooling into a



solid again. On the first night of Chanukkah, each child is presented with a funny little top, called a "trendel," which he may twirl round sharply, and watch as it spins itself out. It is sure to fall with one of its sides uppermost, and as each side bears a raised Hebrew letter, the fun of the game hinges upon which letter the player turns up to view. "Nun"—none, "Gimmel"—all, "He"—half, "Shin"—put in. But the letters had a deeper significance behind the play, one that kept the lesson of Chanukkah ever in mind. The four letters stand for the words

שם	היה	גדול	נס
there	was	great	miracle,

which have reference to the wonderful, almost miraculous victory of the handful of Maccabean soldiers over the vast and trained armies of Syria.

Such were some of the preparations for what was to be to young and old among the descendants of the Maccabee warriors a glad festival week. After this followed days of cleaning and refurbishing, of baking and cooking; for most certainly a whole week of games, of music and song, of gathering together of the various family clans could not well be lived through without an abundance of the good things of life. In all these pleasures the children were allowed their full share.

Nor were the poor forgotten. Fortunate winners in any of the games of chance (which, by the way, because fully permitted and enjoyed during this one week of Chanukkah, never suggested

themselves as an indulgence during the rest of the year) were compelled to put half of their winnings into the boxes fastened upon the inside of the closet door, the one marked "Palestine," the contents of which were taken out twice a year and sent to Zion, the other for the home poor.

Each evening, after the lighting of the candles, the children's tuneful voices mingled with the deeper ones of the elders in the grand old harmony of the Chanukkah hymn, and before the tiny wax tapers had begun to burn down in their sockets, and even while the "Shammash" was still sending up his sputtering appreciation of his position in front, the children, helped and abetted by the older folks, entered upon an evening of such unrestricted enjoyment and pleasant family intercourse as is rarely witnessed in these too busy and too enlightened days.

## OUR MOTHERS

WAS it because our mothers were less educated from the modern point of view, that they were more truly cultured in the higher branches of ethics and of life that make for exalted ideals and noble living? One should hesitate to decry the output of soul and energy of one's own time and generation, but it is hard to understand why these cannot be more effective when fortified by faith in God and loving, loyal adherence to the healthful and sustaining laws of Sinai. The influence of a man or woman who is minded to live a simple life of obedience to law cannot be estimated. In the case of a woman—no matter what the tendencies of her life-companion or her children may be, no matter how superior in intellect they may seem compared with her—something in her quiet, religious conviction and loyalty will make itself felt in their lives. Deep down in the heart of every agnostic and atheist are unqualified respect, admiration, even envy of those whose unquestioning attitude and quiet faith in God tend toward righteousness of living, which, after all, is the aim and aspiration of all human effort, the goal towards which all the scientific research of every age must tend. It is said that many roads lead to heaven. Substitute for the term "heaven" spiritual peace, and then ask whether the roundabout way that leads over the bowlders of doubt, the chasms and yawning

gulfs of scepticism and spiritual travail, is not fraught with greater danger to human character and human institutions than that which keeps the spiritual vision clear, the eyes fastened upon the everlasting heights whereon God dwells in beneficent wisdom and glory. If the truth must be told—and why should it not be, since it is beginning to be recognized?—we are to-day mere pigmy aspirants after the very ideals our mothers realized in their quiet lives of unobtrusive charity and religious well-doing. We to-day have a way of running round in a circle, chasing breathlessly after moths and gay-colored butterflies, an endless, aimless chase after the solution of religious and economic problems that results in nothing but our own undoing. With our mothers it was a straight, uncompromising line of religious obligation and duty to parents, to children, to home, and to the synagogue; a line, the following of which solved problems unconsciously and without fostering any overweening sense of elation that they were doing anything out of the common or accomplishing more than was imposed upon them as Jewish women with a mission of truth to live. To these one-time mothers in Israel the Judaism of to-day owes what still remains of healthful tendency to clean, loyal living. The very yearning in the soul of the progressive Jew for something more than the scientific pap fed to him by Jewish evolutionists, is due to the flicker of pulse and the heart-throb that still beat true to the Judaism our forefathers lived and loved and venerated, for which,

too, when the time came that tried and tested their souls, they were willing to suffer the evils of persecution, the sorrows of martyrdom, the bitterness and agony of death.

## MERRY PURIM

Two little girls were overheard the other day in conversation. From the questions and answers of the one it was evident that she lived in Jewish surroundings, in an atmosphere that fosters the Jewish home life, with its love of tradition and respect for the Law. The other, it will be seen at once, had been reared—as so many of our children are reared nowadays—with but faint knowledge of the history of her race and with absolutely none as regards her present duty to her religion. She was Jewish by birth, of that she was certain, as children somehow are certain of facts and circumstances connected with their lives not specially dilated upon by their elders.

“Are you going to dress up next Saturday?”

“Dress up next Saturday! Certainly; don’t I dress every day?”

“O, I don’t mean that. I mean, are you going to dress up especially, with masks and faces and costumes and fancy dress, as we do?”

“Why, I never heard anything about it. Who said we should?”

“Nobody said so specially, only we always do, every year. Why, we’re going to have Ruth, Rebecca, Esther, George Washington, Napoleon, Julius Cæsar, Martha Washington, Empress Josephine, Hypatia, and—and ever so many others.”

“You don’t say so! That will be fun! Tell me

all about it. Who's going to make the dresses for you?"

"O, we make them ourselves. You mustn't suppose they are very grand. We don't mind the stuff they're made of; it's just the fun of being somebody different, and letting papa and mamma and all the company guess who we are."

"But what's it all about—anybody's birthday party or anniversary?"

"Why, no; it's Purim. Didn't you ever hear of Purim?"

"No; who's he?"

"Didn't you ever hear anything about Purim? Never heard about Mordecai and Haman and Queen Esther, and how they hanged Haman on the very gallows he had built for Mordecai? Don't you go to Sunday-school?"

"No; mamma says I couldn't understand what they teach in Sunday-school."

"O, well, maybe not. Then I'll tell you."

And the surprised little girl, who could not quite conceive such ignorance, gave a very good account, colored by a child's vivid imagination, of the story of Esther as it is written in the Bible, to which her companion listened with breathless interest. "And my mamma says," the narrator concluded, "that this is one of the happiest holidays for the Jews."

"Well, of course," assented the other. "Do you think, if I tell my mamma all about it, she'll let me have a party?"

"O, you needn't have a party this year. Come to my house. We're going to have lots of fun;

and you can help me give away my Purim money, too."

"What's that?"

"It is not much, only a quarter apiece to give away to the poor. It's our Purim money."

"O," sighed the much bewildered and partly enlightened child, "I do wish mamma would tell me about everything, and let me go to Sunday-school."

And so do we. For of all pitiable children these helpless, rich Jewish waifs, who are shut out from the sweetest pleasures of life through the narrow-minded bigotry and ignorance of their irreligious and quasi-cultured parents, are most to be commiserated.

Let the imagination dwell for a second on the pretty sight it would make, if Jewish children throughout every land could reach out and touch each other's hands on this royally festive day of Purim, could see the merry, dancing light in each other's eyes, and know it to be the reflection of joy and pride in their beautiful ancestress, whose nobility and true womanhood saved a whole people from death. What a beautiful circle it would form upon the earth's surface, and how their happy laughter and sweet gayety would amuse, and brighten, and even glorify this steadily revolving old world of ours! Perhaps the circle is already forming—who knows? Shall not we on this side help it along by wishing each other this year a merry Purim, with all its pleasures and all its kindness, all its tender memories and beautiful, helpful traditions? A merry, merry, joyous Purim!



## PURIM

IT IS to be regretted that Purim as a holiday should hold such scant meaning for the present generation of Jews and Jewesses. Until within the past year or two, it had lost even the value attaching to it of the merest traditional interest. With the general revival, however, in matters Jewish, which seems to be the distinguishing mark of these latter days, a renewed desire has come on the part of Jews to restore to their lives some of the ideals and traditions cherished with such love and loyalty by their forefathers. There are still many among us who can recall the annual recurrence of Purim among the Jews as the merriest and quaintest of holidays, given over to feasting and jollity as well as to practical philanthropy among the poor of their race. And truly wonderful in its inspiration to joyous well-doing is this feast day of Purim. We, who are so little versed in our Bibles that the Book of Esther passes current among us as so much historical record to be shelved with the rest of ancient tradition, should bring into requisition our abilities as inveterate novel-readers, and merely as an experiment apply our minds to the perusal of this book as we should to a bit of modern fiction. From a literary point of view alone the result would be found to be more than ample reward for the unusual exercise.

. . . . .

Out of the Gynæceum\* attached to the royal palace at Susa issues a maiden fairer than the dawn. Wondrously beautiful with that inner light and glow suffusing face and form that emanate from a pure soul, she stands for one moment stilled into fear and trembling. Who in all this wide domain but would tremble at the summons of the great Artaxerxes, wisest and bravest of Persian monarchs? But only for one moment—then across the marble courts, whose glittering parterres and perfumed fountains dazzle the sight and intoxicate the senses, moves the girlish figure, white as her virgin vestments of filmy gauze, palpitating as the pearls that clasp at girdle and shoulder, and lie even upon the tiny white-sandalled feet. Such is Hadassah, niece of Mordecai, chosen by the royal ambassadors to be inmate of the House of Virgins until such time as she may appear before the king.

A slight push from her attendant, and she stands alone, within the hush and stillness of the royal presence, under the dreamy gaze of the monarch, who sits in self-imposed solitude upon his throne. Who shall say what it is that draws human souls one to the other? Or who can define its power when once its spell has been established over heart and mind? Most potent power, most magical of spells, that has imparted to the unknown Jewish maiden loveliness so transcendent, guilelessness of soul so noble and perfect that all else of beauty and virtue pales into insignificance, fades and seems as nothing beside hers. Before the simple

\* House of the Women.

majesty of this virgin presence the king has been vanquished in the man, and Hadassah has become for him "Esther the Beautiful," Queen Royal over his heart and life, as she is destined to be queen throughout his entire reign over the affairs of the vast Persian empire.

A loving wife, yet fearing neither frown nor displeasure of her lord, so long as her heart and conscience absolve her of thought of evil, Queen Esther moves, the central figure in a court bristling with conspiracy against the king, rife with intrigue and jealousy, soaring ambition, and self-aggrandizement. Back of the devoted pair of royal lovers, amidst crafty statesmen and ministers, priests, warriors, henchmen, and attendants, loom the figures of Mordecai and Haman, Jew and Pagan, pitted against each other in an unequal contest. Like unto our own day and times were the rise to power and the fall of men in past ages. Like also unto the intrigue of modern courts was the intrigue of ancient days in the courts of the Persian kings. Scene after scene, shifting and changing, discloses Mordecai defamed, disgraced, hated, and threatened, while Haman, his arch-enemy, hater of the Jews, and plotting against them, gloats over his downfall. A step onward in the march of time and presto! behold Mordecai arrayed in purple and ermine, mounted upon a richly caparisoned steed from the royal stables, "the man whom the king delighteth to honor;" and his herald compelled to proclaim him throughout the streets—none other

than Haman, defeated, cursing his ill-starred plans, and vowing eternal vengeance upon the man and his race. Again the scene changes. A whole race doomed to cruel death and extermination through the unscrupulous ambition and evil inciting of a Zeresh (wife of Haman); the same race raised from out of its despair and anguish, from out of its sackcloth and fasting, saved from the direst of fates by the simple courage and unselfish devotion of an Esther. Plot and counterplot, character plastic and human as is the human character of all ages; love, hate, ambition, loyalty to race and faith, merged and blended into one dramatic theme, gathered into one thrilling, graphic narrative, affording endless food for thought, for tender hope, for unquestioning trust in the God of Israel.

Is it any wonder that the practice of reading the Megillah, or Chronicle of Esther, has been maintained by countless generations of Jews? What is religion, if it does not stir the soul to pay tribute to heroic deeds whose springs of action lie in faith and reliance upon the love and wisdom of God, the Creator of man and the universe? How better evidence one's homage to a woman in whose heart glowed the fire of a holy purpose than by recounting, year after year, the story of a nation's travail and its salvation through the self-sacrifice and devotion of a queen, faithfulest of the daughters of Israel? Well may Purim be called carnival time for the Jews—time when they may lay anxieties and burdens aside, divest themselves of wisdom and worldly cares, and, donning the gay attire of jester

and harlequin, with quip and crank, bring merriment to the family circle, cause smiles of wonderment and cheerful laughter to chase away gloom and fear. For, as Israel has ever been guarded and protected in the past, so it will be again, when ignorance and materialism will have departed, and opened the way for soulful devotion to its mission of love and justice and peace to all humanity.

## INTERMARRIAGE

AS YET marriages between Jews and Christians are of rare occurrence, and when they do take place, there is raised such a storm of criticism and disapproval for all parties concerned that any tendencies in this direction are kept in healthful check.

When in a company of women recently the question of intermarriage was raised, one woman of lax religious convictions exclaimed: "I hope the twentieth century will see this old idea of race purity exploded; for, of all nonsensical, conceited notions, it is the worst." It is a rather noticeable fact that the men and women of Jewish persuasion who talk and think in this vein have a precedent in their near family of some sort of mixed Christian relationship, and, failing to make things right to their own minds, they go about preaching the fallacy of Jewish Law and berating the bigotry and impolicy of continuing in the narrow-minded groove of their forefathers. The speaker was no exception to the rule. Some of our so-called wise men in Israel, not sure of their own ground for similar reasons, have in their uncertainty done much to unhinge the minds of feeble folk in their congregations upon this one point. Aside, however, from the idea of race purity, which includes that of Israel's Divine mission to humanity, is the question of the practicability of intermarriage in any age, at any time. In our own day, we have yet to see whether

the happiness accruing from such unions is in proportion to the sacrifice entailed of family ties, of religion, and racial interests. To this it may be answered, with a fair degree of truth, that not all marriages are happy, nor is there any guarantee that marriage between two people of the same faith will turn out altogether harmonious. But whatever the causes that lead to disunion and unhappiness between men and women of the same religion, their wretchedness does not and never can partake of the internal bitterness and warfare that wait upon mixed marriages. It is the one mistake that the ideality of love cannot rectify or remedy, over which it fails to throw its magic glamour. In the course of a lifetime, the vicissitudes attendant upon marriages of this sort force themselves upon one's notice, until conviction is borne in upon the mind that, be the conditions before marriage what they may, no good, earthly or spiritual, ever results from these ill-assorted unions. There are numbers of such households, outwardly peaceful, whose spiritual warfare is evidenced in alternate moods of silent brooding on the part of the different members or of outspoken regret. One family is recalled where the sons, Jews in name (in their helpless infancy the names of the Patriarchs had been inflicted as balm for the father's inner soul travail), cling to the tenets of the Christian mother, while the only daughter, named after a hardshell Baptist grandmother, has identified herself, either through sympathy for her father or strong Jewish heredity, with every religious and philanthropic

movement of her father's people. On the upper floor of the house dwelt, until within recent years, solitary and alone, the old Jewish grandmother, most pathetic of figures in this human spiritual tragedy. Between her son's filial affection, his too evident remorse, and her own desire to add nothing to the estrangement and division of the household, the broken heart of the old Jewess, one Yom Kippur eve, sighed its last on earth, and went to its rest. To his dying hour the son will do bitter soul-penance on that day of days. The daughter, a young woman of brilliant attainments and aspiring life, is outspoken enough on the subject. Two of her brothers have married Christians, and one is paying attentions to a Jewess. "We are the most unhappy household on earth. I am forbidden entrance to the homes of my sisters-in-law because of my possible influence on my nephews; and my youngest brother has been banished from home because of his intention to marry a Jewish girl. As for me, I intend never to leave my father."

Another case of intermarriage can be recalled, where neither the man nor the woman before marriage owned to any religious convictions whatever. "Little free-thinker" and "old atheist" were their favorite terms of endearment. Yet, in the course of years, when sorrow and burdens left their heavy traces, as they do on all human beings of whatever race or creed, each showed a desire to return to the faith of early youth. Consideration for each other prevailing with them, both will in all likelihood live on to the end, a saddened



pair, estranged in soul, and bound to each other only by a lifetime of irremediable heart sickness. In this case it is the wife who suffers most; in general, men are less prone than women to the despair that follows upon spiritual loneliness.

Of only one remembered instance can it be recorded that a modicum of happiness has fallen to the lot of two human beings born into different faiths who became man and wife; and that is because absolute indifference to religion and ignorance of all creeds whatsoever have combined for many years to keep the couple and their children united and happy. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." Yet even this ideal couple has lately developed symptoms of religious effervescence. "Do you know," said the still pretty, lipping wife, "I've been thinking the children ought to be brought up to some religion, and I want Joe to join either a church or a temple, I don't care which." As yet, the faith that is to have the pleasure and honor of welcoming into its fold this pair of brainless lost sheep is a matter of much rollicking fun and laughing discussion in that household.

Surely, Jewish ministers who know better than laymen the blight and misfortune that follow in the train of these mixed marriages have little excuse for granting their priestly sanction to men and women of different faiths who wish to be joined in wedlock. If the law of the Pentateuch, which distinctly and explicitly forbids intermarriage, is not sufficiently binding upon them, there

is the knowledge that heredity is more powerful than love, living beyond it, coloring, influencing, misdirecting. As the ordained spiritual mentors of humanity, they are certainly not justified in adding to the misery and unhappiness already in the world.

Fortunately, though the Jews of to-day are not remarkable for stiff-neckedness, they are intolerant of any such action on the part of their leaders, and he who unhesitatingly gives his consent, and lends the seal of his ministerial office to such a union, sounds the death-knell of his power and influence among his Jewish brethren.

## PREPARATIONS FOR PASSOVER

AND so we are here at the Passover. Some of us have ordered our unleavened bread, and some of us, yea, even some who keep clean houses the whole year round, will begin at the garret and the store-closet, like any old Yankee housekeeper, sorting out the things that can be used from those that may be given away to the poor, peering into unused nooks and crannies, taking up and relaying carpets, and so going through the house, until the cellar is reached, where jars and casks and other accumulations need our attention as to their final disposal. With the hard work finished, one may take a breathing spell, and go off to one's pet aid society, there to arrange matters for the poor, who have their more difficult Passover problems to solve. It is a good thing for many prosperous Jewish women of to-day that they have the poor always with them. For, without the necessity of supplying a certain number of Jewish families with so many pounds apiece of unleavened bread, we should be in veritable danger of forgetting altogether the story in Exodus about the dough carried away in haste out of Egypt by our Hebrew ancestors, and baked by the sun as they carried it into the wilderness that was to be their tarrying place for forty years.

The week just preceding Passover is a busy one for Jewish housekeepers. Those among us who

assert that Passover entails upon observing Jews a week of self-denial of many of the necessities of life, should take a peep on the day before Passover into the pantries and closets, the cupboards and larders of those who have infused their soul and spirit into all this preparation, into every detail of the House Beautiful. Row upon row—on lace-edged shelves or newly oil-clothed ones—stands ranged the special Passover service of china, polished till it gives back the sun's rays, and near by the burnished coppers and shining tins vie with the quaint old silver on the dining-room sideboard, tankards, bowls, loving-cups of gold and silver taken out in honor of the occasion. The linen-closet, too, upstairs, which is to yield up its finest patterned table-cloths, doylies, and napkins to the decking of the table for the Seder nights, is quite in keeping with the rich smell and spicy fragrance that ascends and penetrates from the well-stocked larder below. Just why Passover stores of sugar and coffee, of tea, raisins, lemons, dried fruit, honey cake, wine, and spices, should have this distinct holiday flavor, is one of the things to be forever unexplained. It is, nevertheless, an incontrovertible fact that, whether due to the renewal of everything in the house or to the special care taken in their manufacture and packing, all these ordinary, every-day necessities of life have a decidedly appetizing taste during the gala festival week. If there is not something stimulating and rejuvenating to our sated adult senses in all this array of beauty and usefulness, watch its effect on the children.

“Oh! are we going to drink out of those lovely cups and glasses again? May I have the same one with the pretty handle I had last year for my wine?” or, “Please, mamma, can I help set the table, and make that saucer of grated apples and spices and sweet stuff you put in the centre of the table?”\* But why go on? A volume would be inadequate to express the combined sense of joy spiritual, and satisfaction, and pleasure that the labor of preparing and providing for the Passover brings with it.

\* Charoseth

## PASSOVER CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

IT MAY be that there are some among us who know little about Passover or its importance to the Jews as a holiday. To trace some of the customs that still survive after all these centuries, such as the eating of unleavened bread, the gathering and burning of crusts, which give the final touch to the cleaning of the house, and the celebration of the Seder, one must take a little journey into Jewish history as recorded in the Bible.

When the Hebrews took their flight from Egypt, their preparations were necessarily hurried. That the order to begin their journey came all too soon is shown by the fact that the dough, which was set for baking on the following day, had only been mixed with water, and in this first stage became part of their burden to be carried along with the rest of their worldly possessions. This dough, baked by the intense, scorching rays of the sun (which travelers tell us bakes the very sand of the desert into a hardened substance resembling clay), became the unleavened bread of the Israelites, staying the pangs of hunger and giving them renewed strength for their journey. That marvelous Book of Exodus that tells of Israel's wanderings in the desert—would that we could read it with the ever-present light of history to shine upon and illumine its pages! If it were written out for us by the finger of God that, in order to fulfil the destiny

of our race, we must travel wild untrodden lands, cross angry seas, and be subjected to feuds of alien and unfriendly peoples; no voice of comfort reaching to us, no perception of an earthly goal, nothing but that strange, indescribable fluttering of the heart called hope, undying and imperishable; were all this to be our portion, should not we be making history page upon page, tragic, ennobling, pregnant with thought and meaning for all time? Surely our endurance under suffering, our determination to overcome all obstacles, our prayerful desire to fulfil God's word and to reach at last the land of His promise, wherein we were to dwell under the safety of His Law, would merit the love and reverence of our children and their children unto all generations. Inasmuch as our pilgrimage might subserve the highest aims and ideals of humanity, we would desire that posterity should dwell upon it for their own well-being, recalling it joyfully each year as a lesson of hope as well as of trust in Him who guides nations as though they were children. Doubtless our ancestors, gazing down the long vista of the centuries, saw Israel blessed and blessing, recounting to coming generations the story of Exodus, glorifying it by their willingness to continue in the struggle for humanity, evincing their devotion by loving adherence to the letter as well as the spirit of the law of Sinai.

The crusts,\* placed in conspicuous places to be gathered for burning, are a sign of fealty to those gone before, who have held close to the command-

\* "Bittul Chametz," commonly called "Chometz Batteln."

ments and made tradition for us. It is a symbol that the work of purifying the house from leaven has received sanction through the final grace and prayer of the master of the house. A custom growing out of this, and one appreciated by those who receive the generous gift, is that of bestowing all remaining leaven—whatever it be in quantity, great or small—upon Christian families in need.

To those who have lived calmly and contentedly all their years under the banner of Judaism and the healthful influence of its laws, it seems the most natural thing in the world to pay full measure of tribute to a nation whose heroic struggle our imagination alone can help us to understand, and whose eventual triumph the world agrees with us in recognizing as the keynote of all subsequent civilization and progress. Therefore, when we eat unleavened bread, and observe with ceremony the Seder, it is not only because it is commanded us in the Bible, but because of our own desire to perpetuate the memory of our ancestors; to celebrate as nearly as possible in detail the great events which Passover commemorates.

From beginning to end these customs, though they vary in different countries in some slight respects, convey the same meaning of distinct law and purpose. In the main it is history that is honored, the history of a great event. The traditions of a race are being perpetuated, traditions that reflect glory and honor upon a nation. Intelligently understood and observed, customs such as these bring into the home atmosphere an element of joyous activity, love and veneration for the past,



present peace and contentment not to be attained by all the intellectual striving of a lifetime.

Notwithstanding all this, it has become the fashion among many of our brethren to decry customs which they declare to be obsolete, more to be "honor'd in the breach, than the observance." It is well for us as a race that the backbone of Israel thinks differently. Customs like these keep the circulation of an entire people in a state of healthful activity. They typify the soul and sentiment that serve to unite and weld all men in a common brotherhood, and these broadly human elements in all religions lighten the way of men in a world of hard, dry fact, of disunion of intellectual ideas, of overmuch material striving. If Passover has no meaning for Jews, if the great events which led to the writing of the Decalogue do not appeal to a race of men whose ancestry for unwritten generations has aimed to carry its message of peace and humanity to all the world, then no other great human event, no historical achievement, can ever hope to quicken its pulse or disturb its serene egotism. If the exodus from Egypt and the up-rearing of a nation whose history has made and colored all subsequent history have no meaning for the descendants of Israel, neither can the struggle for and the declaration of American Independence be expected to find proper response or lodging in their breasts.

In the dry verbiage of such an Israel (Heaven forefend that even its shadow be cast upon our world!) there will hardly be room for such terms as Love and Freedom, Patriotism and Religion.

## AN IDEAL NEW GRANDMOTHER

WHAT say my young friends to instituting a search after an old-fashioned new grandmother? One who shall not be banished to dwell in solitude, but is to be installed with due pomp and ceremony in our households, hitherto planned on lines of youth and jollity, heedless of the claims of old age. We have had enough of the ill consequences that follow upon unrestricted liberty of thought and speech, and we need to get back as quickly as possible to a saner way of thinking and living. And the first step to this desired goal is to find and restore the grandmotherly element to our households. In silk apron and cap, she shall sit in her seat of honor by the window, to catch all the light of the short winter afternoon on her worn old Bible with its yellow leaves, dog-eared, and marked here and there with tear stains. Close, indeed, must the Good Book be held during all the years of striving and sorrow to take on the semblance of a dear friend whose comfort is beyond earthly price and reckoning. And when the sun has faded in the west, and the dim eyes are tired, we will nestle close to her knee, looking up into the furrowed face, while we listen to the story of Moses leading the children of Israel out of Egypt—that march of millions of human beings guided by the indomitable soul and purpose of one man, most uplifted and inspired of Israel's warriors and prophets.

Immortal days of childhood! Who can paint such graphic pictures and keep the youthful heart so enthralled as these slow-of-speech grandmothers, whose eyes, as they rest upon the banked-up clouds pierced by great golden rifts of sunlight, behold in them the glory of the Lord and His promise of a new redemption-day for Israel. Listen as she recounts the story :

Out from Egypt, crossing over unknown, trackless wastes, and pursued by the enemy from whom but now they have been ransomed, the Israelites reach at last the shores of the Red Sea—raging torrent, deep, impassable, not to be forded, nor even attempted. But see where God's mighty hand has separated the angry waters, staying the billows on either side and disclosing a strip of sand sufficiently broad for them to cross in safety! Slowly, painfully, hours consumed in the journey, they are over at last, they and their dear ones, families and brethren.

Now they are on the further side, their hands upraised to Heaven, in thanksgiving and praise to Him who has watched over them and guided them through every danger. Suddenly their faces blanch; their hearts are terror-stricken at the menace of horn and trumpet-blast that herald the oncoming legions. Despair once more takes possession of the hordes of Israel. Pharaoh is in hot pursuit, and only this narrow neck of land between them and inevitable destruction. Alas for the promises of their intrepid leader, for the dreams of a new nation! Awful moment of

impending doom, death or, what is worse, return to slavery!

Lo! Once again God's protecting hand has stretched out over His beloved; a miracle is being wrought under their very eyes. Egypt's vast army with the monarch in the lead, cavalry, infantry, archers, spearmen, seers, and soothsayers, steed and rider, all, all are engulfed in the raging, seething flood, God's hand staying the waters that Israel may pass over in safety, and withdrawn that the same waters may be the sepulchre of Egypt's power and might.

The sun has set. With many questions still to be asked and answered, we must give ear to our newly acquired treasure of a grandmother, who admonishes that we speed the Sabbath with praise and song over the Habdalah,\* especially on the Sabbath preceding the Passover. After which, she will lend herself once more to the busy, everyday, commonplace duties of life, into which she infuses the spirit of a truly devout old heart that rings ever true to her mission in Israel. There is still much to be done in preparation for the great Passover festival that is to honor Israel's deliverance from a relentless, enslaving tyrant. There are crystal clear decoctions of fruit or other ambrosial draughts to be set boiling and simmering after old-world recipes, or traces of leaven to be

\* The service marking the close of the Sabbath and the beginning of the week.

removed from kitchen-shelf or table. Is this vision of a busy, careful grandmother but the imagination of one too prone to the ideal, or was the world once full of such? If so, where have they all fled, and are we to have them or others like them no more?

One thing is certain. The practical spirit that is to actuate our ideal grandmothers to oversee and superintend every detail of their home-making, will not find it necessary to apologize to their higher religious convictions for its fealty to Law and tradition. They will probably understand better than we do that Judaism is, above everything else, a religion of life, and that a healthful tendance upon the needs of the body may well go hand-in-hand with care for the soul, indeed, is apt to beget for the body a higher and better condition for the soul's dwelling therein.

Wherefore see our hands extended in yearning and welcome, ye ideal grandmothers, wisest and gentlest of mentors, most devout and inspiring of Israel's home presences. A golden era for Judaism when ye shall have voice once more in our households, to rule, to bless, and to restrain the young from folly and license not in conformity with the traditions of our ancestral religion!

## A SEDER PARTY

THE wave of conservatism that has overtaken Jews in America is responsible for some of the recent efforts to restore a custom long held in abeyance and deemed by some totally forgotten. Quite a number of young married people undertook the celebration of the Seder, and, having nothing more than their good intention to show them the way to its consummation, hit upon various original plans. One thoroughly well-meaning couple, noted for its propensity for good living, sent out invitations for a more than usually sumptuous dinner. Before settling down to the business of the hour, the host arose and expressed himself as extremely gratified to be able, with a number of his co-religionists gathered about the festive board, to dedicate the present occasion to the joyous anniversary of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian misrule and tyranny. Which fact, to be better borne in their vague (upon all subjects pertaining to Judaism) minds, would call for one entire course of the dinner to be given over to matzos and bitter herbs, to be helped down by champagne. "And now," to the waitress, "bring on the caviare sandwiches and oysters."

Another couple arranged a theatre party, having in view at the end a visit to a down-town restaurant where a dinner à la Passover would be procurable. No precaution having been taken to discover the

primitive and darkly benighted tendencies of the restaurateur, our expectant party were met by a placard on the door stating that the hostelry was "closed on account of Jewish holiday." In this most woful plight, they bethought them of Delmonico's somewhat further up-town, and once more on their native heath, within civilized precincts, congratulated themselves upon the probability of always finding leavened food of excellent quality, when unleavened, as in the present instance, declined to be forthcoming.

Some young people there were, however, who were minded to have a real Seder, and so undertook in all earnestness to restore the inspiring ceremonial to their households. To insure success, they decided upon the following excellent plan. Some one who knew how the service ought to be conducted was chosen master of ceremonies, and placed in the seat of honor at the head of the table. In the centre, opposite each other, sat the host and hostess, and to each side of them were ranged a motley band of Israel's strays and castaways—desirable bachelors without homes and wives of their own to relieve the monotony of their single blessedness ; a married couple of ethical culturists who had expressed a desire to return for this once to the fold ; a lone spinster with memories of past Seder nights, when Father conducted the services (ah! never to be forgotten days of childhood!) ; a widow whose religion consisted chiefly of an only son ; lately, with the knowledge of nearing the end of life's journey, had come an accountable longing

for things dear to him of sainted memory—the husband—who, during the few blessed years of their life together, had been a faithful, unswerving adherent of the Judaism of his forefathers; lastly, the four children of the house, indifferent, eager, curious, loyal, according to their individual temperaments. Upon this small modern horde of groping Israelites, it was earnestly hoped the sanctity of the Seder night would descend in fullest measure. And, strange to say, it did. For soon all were under the spell of a story that challenged the mocking jest, and rendered flat and meaningless the quick repartee and play upon the words of the always misprinted and bungling Hagadahs. Stealing unconsciously upon them had come a sense of kinship, a kinship that had run the gamut of comedy to tragedy, up and down through the ages, striking, intoning, clashing forth sounds, harmonious, melancholy, blatant, yet all bearing the same exhaustless plaint of hope for mankind through the sorrows of one chosen race, God-elected and selected for a Divine mission and purpose.

It was the crustiest bachelor of the trio of self-consequential celibate specimens who first made the discovery that the spinster opposite, supposed to be of the dread “new woman” type, was having a luxuriously melancholy time all to herself, shedding gentle womanly tears into her handkerchief; which fact recalled to his mind a widowed sister out West struggling under the burden of raising a large family of boys and girls; recalled also some of



the promises of his boyhood made round the time of his Bar-Mitzvah, as well as some promises of his later manhood, made to his departed mother about this self-same sister. "By Jove, I'll have them all here with me by next Passover, if it breaks me."

The ethical culturists, reserving for themselves a portion of the atmosphere charged with a culture all unknown to their co-religionists—such is the fond belief of this most astray of Israel's sects—grasped very comprehendingly the story of Moses saved from the bulrushes by the long arm of Pharaoh's princess daughter. They approved the incident as leading up to the rest, the climax as it were, of the story—Moses, the teacher and leader, a veritable redeemer of humanity (miracles excepted), bringing order and brotherhood out of disorder and human chaos. "There seems to be a very intelligent meaning underlying it all," she whispered. "There is a meaning to everything," he answered, evasive as is the way of men who are suddenly recalled to a sense of their own insignificance in the light of history past or present.

It was the old lady who, reciting the plagues, touched her little finger to the wine, and counted the drops in precise, articulate tones, her eyes seeking her son's as though to say, "This is the way your dear father counted the ten plagues when we had the Seder at home." After which, she ordered the glasses refilled, and when the commotion of "whys" and "wherefores," of questions and explanations, had subsided, on went the reading at a pace in consonance with their different abilities in

the Hebrew or the English translation on the opposite page. To the question stammered by the youngest child, "Why, on this night, etc.," all replied with verve and gusto, strange and unexplainable even to themselves. "That is the sweetest bitter herb I've tasted in a long time," choked out one of the bachelors through tears of agony over the strongest of horse-radish roots.

"And I've got the prize package," shouted the youngster, who had lain under the table during the better part of the proceedings for the very laudable purpose of stealing the hidden cake of unleavened bread, without which the after-supper proceedings would be impossible; its redemption at the present owner's price being also a part of the proceedings—in this case nothing less than the promise of a Shetland pony from his father. Supper followed. The disappearance of the customary eggs and "hard tack," as the table parlance expressed it, the draughts of ruby and amber wines freely imbibed (which, fortunately for the race, means in moderation), the appreciation of delicately prepared as well as substantial viands—all called from the host and hostess a jubilation that knew no bounds. Households that have grown up in annual expectance of this Passover time of jollity and good-fellowship can little appreciate what this isolated bit of Jewish ceremonial meant in the colorless existence of this strangely assorted, temporary congregation. The Seder may be called one of those functions to which the intellectual and the emotional impart their quality to make it truly "a feast of reason and a flow of soul."

It was a fearless chorus and a fearfully unintelligible Hebrew that attacked the "El Bene," and a most uproarious and unmanageable one that struck out boldly for the "Chad Gadya," the Jewish "House that Jack Built."

"The best party I've been to in years," quoth the bachelor of the good resolve.

"I don't know when I've enjoyed anything so much," murmured the spinster in flushed contentment.

"As an experience, quite a novelty," agreed the non-committal ethical culturist, for the moment in blissful forgetfulness of the lecture on the following morning.

"You're all welcome to try it right here again next year," announced the beaming hostess.

"Next year in Jerusalem," quoted the quiet, unobtrusive individual—not of their set—who had been induced to lend his services for one night in behalf of these benighted brethren of his.

And a silence of the sort that begets thought upon the deeper problems of life, the problem of a nation's endless, undying hope, fell upon the departing company.

## PICTURES OF JEWISH HOME LIFE

THERE are Jewish boys and girls, who, besides the advantage of a thorough education in the schools of our city, are unconsciously being put through another and more important training at home. The boys are bright and modern—all American boys are that—and the girls are ambitious and fond of pretty things. There are few American girls who are not ambitious to improve and who are not dainty in their tastes. These boys and girls are well housed and well cared for—are, in fact, surrounded by all the signs of wealth and ease.

The father is a busy man, engrossed in the problem of providing for his large family, and the mother is employed from early morning until night attending to the management of her house and the wants of her large brood of children. Notwithstanding these cares, the father still finds time to interest himself in politics, in the amusements of the day, and in the synagogue of which he is a member and a regular attendant, and the mother sews for the poor once a week, and finds time to look after the wants of one or two families in need. Altogether, it is a well-employed, happy household.

But on Friday, the day preceding the Sabbath day of rest, it is a perfect hive of busy bees. Last polish to the silver and door knobs, last finishing of school tasks and putting away of music—for no one writes or studies or practices scales on the

Sabbath—and last stitches put in bows and finery, for even the servants are not allowed to do anything save the most necessary labor. An extra scrubbing and brushing makes the faces of the younger members of the family as polished almost as the silver on the sideboard. The older ones are trusted to look after themselves.

Downstairs, in the kitchen, wonderful things have been going on all day. The cook, a Christian, for many years trained to the ways of a Jewish household, and almost a Jewess herself by habit and life, is quite alive to the need of extra good fare for the Sabbath, when all are at home and able to give their whole attention to the good things she delights in making.

What a bustling day! It needs must be, for nothing so upsets the head of the house like getting late for the synagogue service, and it is his express desire that when he leaves the house he shall carry with him the impression of work done and a picture of the mother-bee with wings folded and at rest. Therefore, everything is done in good time and season.

Somewhere around sunset, the father, dressed in his best, accompanied by his boys—and they are of all ages and sizes—issues from the house to attend the Sabbath eve services. Nor does he forget, on going out, to touch reverently the tiny enclosed scroll, wherein are contained the “Hear, O Israel,” and a paragraph declaring the duty of our nation to obey the laws of God, which is attached to the jamb of the doorway. The words, “Thou shalt

nail them upon the doorposts of thy house," are not only heeded in this household, but their meaning is fully understood and appreciated.

While they are away, the good mother, very beautiful and dignified in her carefully donned attire, lights the Sabbath candles. She is careful to light them a little earlier, because she has heard in her girlhood—listening at the knee of a serene-faced old grandmother—that the unquiet souls of the dead, who may be suffering in another world, are blessed with rest on the sacred Sabbath. This same mother, when the Sabbath day is over and the new week about to begin, delays the lighting of the lamps, that the day of rest may be lengthened for these sufferers in spirit.

You will say that this is merely a legend or a superstition. It may be. But observe how the instinct of pity and compassion extends itself, through it, to that "undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns."

Around the mother lighting her Sabbath lights cluster the little ones, patiently waiting for the completion of the blessing, for sometimes this moment of uplifting is the only one in a busy, anxious week that she can give to calm thought and meditation.

The maids move softly about, putting the last touches to the table; and when each little face receives its Sabbath kiss, the help proffered by the children in placing the chairs and drawing down the shades is not despised. You should see that table—glistening white, with the high silver can-

delabrum in the centre casting its soft rays upon flowers, silver, and glass. At the head, where is the father's seat, are two great loaves of bread under an embroidered cloth, upon which is the Sabbath commandment to rest. Beyond these, to one side, are the decanter of wine with which the Sabbath is to be sanctified and blessed, and plates of cakes of various shapes. The room is alight and aglow with the sense of a special occasion. Then comes the sound of footsteps and voices, and the synagogue visitors are met on the threshold, and welcomed with wishes for a Good Sabbath. Even into the kitchen the bustle and reception of the Sabbath penetrate, and any member of the family who slights the faithful cook by not extending the usual greeting to her would be apt to be reminded of it in the coming week by some goody withheld or attention withdrawn. Each child presses forward to receive the father's benediction and blessing, and then all chant and welcome the bride. One cannot conceive anything more beautiful than this weekly repetition of welcoming the Day of Rest as bride to the nation of Israel. The beauty and value of it all does not strike one during the years when it is gone through with as a matter of course and as a habit, but later on in life, the memory of it and its effect in softening character are inestimable. No need to tell of the meal that follows, when platters that have come in filled are taken away empty, and cake after cake disappears as if by magic; nor shall I tell of the next day, which, after the synagogue service,

is taken up in visits to grandma and relatives, pleasant walks in the park, and the reading of books. It is a thoroughly enjoyable day, full of rest and easy conscience, with few thoughts of the workaday world to mar its pleasure or disturb its peace.

Such is the Sabbath which comes with each week. But what about the holidays like the Passover, the Feast of Booths, and the Feast of Purim? If these children are watched on such occasions, it will be seen that no boys or girls get more fun and real sport out of life than they do. Fully a fortnight before Purim every closet and trunk in garret and cellar undergoes thorough examination and close inspection at the hands of the young people. Such whispering and planning! Any one who did not know what holiday was coming along would be puzzled how to account for the conspiracies and apparent intrigues going on all about him. There is a good deal of concealing of mysterious bundles, popping of heads out of doorways, and sudden withdrawing of heads into rooms as one comes up the stairs, besides warnings of sentinels placed to keep an eye over the banisters. Money changes hands; there is some begging and much borrowing; there are purchases, not always wise, of gold and silver tinsel, brass beads and bells and highly colored paper muslin. Something important is on foot. That is evident. Meanwhile, in the kitchen, large quantities of Haman's three-cornered cakes are being baked, as also rolled cakes with



citron and raisins and almonds all pounded together. The excitement in the children's quarter is somewhat abated, though bubbling up and over at unexpected moments. The story in the Bible that tells of Mordecai and the beautiful Queen and the wicked Haman has been read to the accompaniment of stamping of feet and derisive rattles every time Haman's name is mentioned, and a fuller meaning of the joy at deliverance from death is brought home to each one by the gift plates which are sent every Purim morning to friends and relatives and dependent poor. These plates, as a rule, are filled with oranges, nuts, raisins, and cake, but there are others which use cake and fruit as a cover to conceal a silver dollar or a greenback underneath. These latter plates are intended as a gift either to some poor family on the East Side or some poor relative. All of them are covered neatly with a napkin, and either placed in a basket, or carefully made up into a package, and, carrying these, the boys and girls become the unconscious doers of good deeds and pleasant courtesies. The evening is to be spent at grandma's, where all great occasions are celebrated. There will be much ringing of the front door bell, many guests, and many unknown maskers. It will be all frolic and fun and hiding of identity behind ugly masks and strange costumes, and no one will be able to penetrate the disguise. Certainly not. Ah! if you could see that yearly Purim procession. Soldiers and brides and nuns and negroes; newsboys, Rip Van Winkles, baboons, and peddlers, all with the queerest

looking masks on, and all thoroughly and well disguised. It is a great feast, this merry one of Purim, and something to talk and laugh over for many months after.

But what about the Feast of Booths, better known by its Hebrew name of Sukkoth, a holiday commemorating the gathering in of fruits and cereals and the final vintage? In tents, with the light of the sky to penetrate through the green boughs thus dwelt the ancient Jews each year, and thus under the heavens ascended hymns of praise and thanksgiving for a fruitful year. One would think that living in a city would make it impossible to celebrate this ancient festival. But nothing is impossible to the determined will when a good cause is to be served by it, as may be seen by this most interesting event in the home life of some Jewish children.

In the fall of the year, the holidays come so thick and fast, one after the other, that it is always a surprise to the children, who think Sukkoth still a long way off from the Day of Atonement, to find, a few days after the Great Fast Day, the old carpenter appearing on the scene—as he has done since one can remember—and in his wake a wagon with tools and hammer and nails and fine new boards. To look at him, one wouldn't think that that old man with a head like the prophet Jeremiah earned his living as a carpenter, but so it is, though the two things cannot quite be put together. There is nothing for the children to do in the early stages but watch the boards being

carefully measured and cut according to religious measurement, so many feet high and no more for the three necessary walls. Most of the time they are in the prophet's, or rather the carpenter's, way, or are running off with his hammer when he needs it to drive in an important nail; or, more often, they are plying him with questions about Jerusalem, and whether he ever saw any of the Bible people; for they are quite certain that a man with a head just like the pictures in the Bible must have known Abraham well. As for Moses, he could tell all about him easily. One day, when he was telling something of his childhood, and mentioned his grandfather, the children thought he must be referring to Noah. Well! children have strange fancies, and live in a very beautiful world of their own. When the booth approaches completion, there arrives a wagon load of roof—that is, what will be the roof when placed—great branches of fragrant fir and hemlock with tiny groups of knobs like acorns here and there between the leaves. Then there is the excitement of climbing on ladders to get these evenly placed and not so thick as to exclude the blue sky. Then come the benches securely fastened against the sides, and the building of the booth is complete. But that is only the beginning. The bare boards have to be covered and draped, the windows curtained, and the doorway hung with portières. A hanging lamp and side candelabra are to be suspended somehow, and mirrors and pictures, and last but not least the fine fruits: pears and citrons and

great clusters of grapes are to be hung from the green branches overhead. Only the deftest are allowed to string these and attach them to the boughs at regular distances and alternating so as to produce a good color effect. No need for Kindergartens in days like these. The days and the months and the years are full of splendid practical lessons, which cannot but abide with them through life. The hanging of the fruit naturally tempts the children to eat. But they are told that on the last day of Sukkoth, right after dinner, which of course is eaten in the beautiful little booth, they may jump on the table and help themselves; and assuredly they keep a very alert eye on that fruit, even seeing it ripen and grow richer in color and more luscious in taste. Truly no fruit ever tastes as does the fruit scrambled for and torn down from the greenery that has covered the family for a whole week's outing in the open air. Of course, they cannot get any breakfast unless they recite the blessing over the fragrant citron sent from Jerusalem and the bunch of palms and myrtle. Later, when they grow older, and have cares and children of their own, one of their duties will be to light their festival candles in the booth, thus adding to the general illumination and festivity their candles and their important presence. Sukkoth is certainly a great holiday, almost as great as Passover, but not quite, because the latter commemorates the greatest event in the history of the Jews, the Exodus from Egypt.

Did any of you ever have to empty your pockets

on the last day just before the beginning of Passover; to turn them inside out, and brush them free of crumbs and leavened food, as these children do? Did you ever hunt from cellar to garret for a corner of a cupboard where you could hide away some precious unfinished candy, too good to throw away, and not to be given away, because it might excite comment, and give rise to uncomfortable questions from your Christian schoolmate? But alas! no corner is safe from broom and brush and the watchful eye of a gentle old grandma, whose promise of Passover honey is supposed to make up for what one is compelled to sacrifice. But if this promise does not dislodge the hidden sweet stuff, then does the procession that forms after the spectacled grandfather, who, carrying a dust-pan and feather-brush and lighted by a single candle, passes from room to room gathering crumbs of leavened bread, which have been left for him on mantel or bureau to gather, and which, with all remaining leavened things, are to be burned the next morning.

It is more than all the candy in the world is worth, to be haunted for a whole week by a forbidden package in a gloomy corner, knowing that a blessing in Hebrew words rests on a house supposed to be free of all leavened things. And so from the New Year with its presents and congratulations and loving letter concealed under the father's plate and written by the best scholar, to the great Day of Atonement with its made up quarrels and reconciliations, its brave self-control

and restraining of appetite and the final breakfast in the evening, one might go on talking forever.

These children who are trained by the wisdom and devout spirit of their parents are very happy children. Not different from other children in most things, but understanding much and trained to much that most children remain unconscious of. Then comes Chanukkah and the good times with games our little friends have for the whole week, during which they light the slender wax tapers, and sing the hymn that tells all about the Maccabees and their great fight and victory over the Syrians. It never occurs to these children that, because Christmas comes about the same time, the holidays should be mixed up, and one passed off for the other. Quite the contrary. There is a charming dignity about them which respects their Christian neighbor for observing his holiday, and demands similar respect for the observance of their own. It all depends on the way we are taught and reared. Girls and boys who have no religious home training are apt to do a great deal of thinking, and unhealthy thinking at that. Indeed, boys and girls are often not credited with either the ability or the inclination to think just when they are thinking earnestly and, for the most part, without guidance on the deepest questions of life. Happy the children who, during this mental ordeal, live in the simple, practical atmosphere of a Jewish home.

There is not a Jew in America, whether he hail from England, Germany, or Russia, who will not,

when recurring to his childhood, speak with reverent tone of his life under his parents' roof—a life wherein the daily round of duties and devout interest in the affairs of the community blended to make an atmosphere of serenity and cheerfulness. From the religion practiced every day in the week sprang the impressions that leave never-dying memories. From the Sabbath peace down to the simplest detail of dutiful love and filial obedience, it was all present in the Jewish home, and it is to this background that every country in the world owes its best Jewish citizenship.

It is quite possible to grow up strong and athletic and modern, to be fond of football and of sport, to love poetry and the drama and good literature, and yet be a loyal Jew, with simple, home-like tastes and a care for the religious side of the character. There is nothing that will so interfere with true progress as carelessness and indifference to one's religion. It is pleasant to know how much the Sunday-schools are doing for young people; but it would be better for both the children and the schools, if the knowledge of the Bible history and literature given and received here were supplemented by the beautiful ceremonies, the healthful restraints, and the simple pleasures of the Jewish Home.

## SOBRIETY IN JEWISH LIFE

A JEWESS seated in company with three bright Christian women recently found the conversation drifting to subjects and into channels of thought that are at present engrossing the attention of the world. Each woman had a hobby, and each woman rode it remarkably well. All showed broad knowledge of their subjects, with carefully gathered statistics and well-defined lines, where good was separated from evil, and where both blended.

Number One was a Blue Ribbon woman—a rabid disciple of Frances Willard, with the eloquence of a Gough and the assurance of an oracle. She knew the number of saloons to each block, the quality and quantity of the stimulants consumed, the annual expenditure of money for vinous products, the frauds against the government through illicit distilling, etc., etc. She proved by the Mohammedan prohibition against drink that drink was a crime against humanity, against government, against Heaven.

Number Two pinned her faith to Vegetarianism. She ascribed the degeneracy of mankind and the world generally to carnivorous habits. Lack of nerve fibre, depreciation of the man species, evil passions, tendency to war and blood-thirstiness, as well as heart-failure and apoplexy, all these would disappear from the earth, and the lion and the lamb (who, by the way, must be tired of being served up



for imaginary millennium purposes) would rest their weary limbs and lie down together only when cabbage and sprouts, greens, milk, and eggs were the universal food. The Buddhists, she maintained, were the most peaceful and the longest-lived people in the world, besides being the oldest and wisest, and they subsisted on a few grains of rice daily and roots dug out of the earth.

Number Three was a Good Government woman, and on her tomahawk were inscribed Clean Politics and Woman Suffrage. Woman rocked the cradle of the world, and woman's housekeeping instinct would clear the Augean stables, and keep them clean. She resorted to the ancient history of China and of Judea for examples, showing in what high esteem the mother and the wife were held in both lands, and compared it with our modern state of downtrodden inferiority, our subservience to the lordliness and imbecility of the wretched masculine sex.

Now, it so happens that the Blue Ribbonite and her entire family abominate vegetables. The green salad advocate favors an occasional drop of rye as a help to stimulate the digestion, and the suffragist attributes her brawn and muscle to rare roast beef.

It was rather a lively discussion, one that bordered at times on what Kipling calls "language." So engrossing was the conversation that no one noticed that Number Four had not said a word for nearly an hour—had, indeed, sat listening through the torrents of speech, of statistics, and excited proof and demonstration, in wonder as to how it

would all end. Whereupon she found herself suddenly elevated to the position of umpire.

Questioned the advocate of temperance: "Is not drinking wines and liquors and stimulants a sin, a practice out of consonance with the highest conceptions of manhood, a protest against nature?"

"And I want to know, is not the eating of blood and rare meats and animal food an abhorrent practice in these days of high civilization, of intellectual culture of the masses, of aiming for the light of pure soul and reason?"

"And I say that all such questions are slight, compared with the important one of the influence of good morals upon men and women, upon government, upon schools, and upon society."

It certainly was no easy position, this of sitting in judgment and rendering decision upon matters of such grave moment as are setting our world of twentieth century thinkers by the ears. But it so happened that some researches into the Good Book, some time previous, for another purpose, had covered this very ground, and they came to use in this emergency. Wine and stimulants have been drunk in moderation by the Jews since the beginning of their history. One of the Psalms refers to God making the grass to sprout for cattle and creating wine to make glad the heart of man. Upon the Sabbath, the festivals, and all joyous occasions, wine is a necessary adjunct of the ceremonies, and yet intemperance has never been a prevalent vice among Hebrews.

The eating of flesh has also been a part of the

Jewish life. In referring to the products of the land of Israel, Deuteronomy has it: "I will give grass in my field, for thy cattle, and thou shalt eat and be sated and bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He hath given thee."

Whatever evils have in our day arisen from the habit of flesh eating must be ascribed to the fact that the Jewish laws, which robbed meat of its evil effects by demanding obedience to certain rules and regulations before its consumption as food, have not been honored by other nations. The Jews as a race are peaceful; the tendency to blood diseases and apoplexy among them is not great, and their intellectual capacity is unequaled by any other race in the world.

As to the unquestioned right of woman in Israel to rule in its councils, as well as over her children and her household, with a sway absolute and equal to that of a queen on her throne, the present world of woman suffrage is but too ready to adduce it as indisputable fact.

As it all came to Number Four in a rush, she herself was struck by the practical tenor of the laws of her people, which, forbidding neither meat nor drink, yet make the laws governing speech and conscience and morals have a certain interdependence with the laws concerning the former, so that all together form one complete, rounded code of physical and moral law that enables the Jew to live a temperate, well-ordered life, with none of the evils and none of the fears of this modern age to puzzle or to threaten him.

And now, while three Christian women have set about making a study of Mosaic Law, forming themselves into a committee to investigate and question their respective pastors relative to these ancient laws, the Jewess is thinking how strange it will be, when, some day, all these theories of intemperance, of vegetarianism, of social and governmental purity having been exploded, the Jews will wake to find the world fashioning and forming itself on the basis of Jewish laws of health and regimen and of a wise moderation in all things, which they themselves, the keepers of the Holy Book and the so-called conservers of its wisdom, have thrown aside, and adjudged worthless.

# PUBLICATIONS

OF THE

## Jewish Publication Society of America

---

### HISTORY

**HISTORY OF THE JEWS.**—By PROF. H. GRAETZ.  
\$2.00 per volume. \$9.00 per set of 6 volumes.

- Vol. I. From the Earliest Period to the Death of Simon the Maccabee (135 B.C.E.). 553 pp.
- Vol. II. From the Reign of Hyrcanus to the Completion of the Babylonian Talmud (500 C.E.). 656 pp.
- Vol. III. From the Completion of the Babylonian Talmud to the Banishment of the Jews from England (1290 C.E.). 675 pp.
- Vol. IV. From the Rise of the Kabbala (1270 C.E.) to the Permanent Settlement of the Marranos in Holland (1648 C.E.). 743 pp.
- Vol. V. From the Chmielnicki Persecution in Poland (1648 C.E.) to the Present Time. 766 pp.
- Vol. VI. Containing a Memoir of the Author by Dr. Philipp Bloch, an Index to the Five Volumes, Maps, and a Chronological Table of Jewish History. 644 pp.

"Professor Graetz is the historiographer *par excellence* of the Jews. His work, at present the authority upon the subject of Jewish history, bids fair to hold its pre-eminent position for some time, perhaps decades."—*Preface to Index Volume.*

**OUTLINES OF JEWISH HISTORY.** From the Return from Babylon to the Present Time.—By LADY MAGNUS. Revised by M. FRIEDLÄNDER. With three Maps, a Frontispiece, and Chronological Tables. 388 pp. Library Edition, \$1.00; School Edition, 75 cents.

"The entire work is one of great interest; it is written with moderation, and yet with a fine enthusiasm for the great race which is set before the reader's mind."—*Atlantic Monthly*.

### ESSAYS AND MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

**AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK.** Edited by CYRUS ADLER.

For 5660 (1899-1900). 290 pp. 75 cents.

For 5661 (1900-1901). 763 pp. \$1.00.

For 5662 (1901-1902). 321 pp. 75 cents.

"The point of interest . . . in this new issue is certainly the sketch of the history of the Jews in Roumania, and of the Jewish situation there since the treaty of Berlin."—*Nation*.

**SONGS OF EXILE.** By Hebrew Poets.—Translated by NINA DAVIS. 146 pp. 75 cents.

"Their charm of manner and depth of feeling must win for these poems many devoted admirers."—ISRAEL ABRAHAMS. *Jewish Chronicle* (London).

**THE ETHICS OF JUDAISM.**—By PROFESSOR M. LAZARUS, Ph.D. Translated by HENRIETTA SZOLD. Complete in four parts.

Part I. Foundation of Jewish Ethics. 309 pp. \$1.25.

Part II. Sanctification of Life and Aim of Morality. 300 pp. \$1.25.

"For the book itself there is no other word but indispensable."—*Expository Times*.

**JEWISH SERVICES IN SYNAGOGUE AND HOME.**—By LEWIS N. DEMBITZ. 487 pp. \$1.75.

"A work which will keep up the knowledge and remembrance of the devotional life of the Jews as it was in the past, and of the liturgical literature as it evolved throughout ages and in various countries."—*Jewish Spectator*.

**STUDIES IN JUDAISM.**—By S. SCHECHTER. 359 pp.  
\$1.75.

“Mr. Schechter is one of the few men whom we possess to-day who seem to understand that to popularize Judaism is not unworthy of the greatest scholar.”—EMIL G. HIRSCH, *Reform Advocate*.

**JEWISH LITERATURE AND OTHER ESSAYS.**—  
By GUSTAV KARPELES. 404 pp. \$1.25.

“The essays have the charm of an attractive style, combined with a subject of great and varied interest.”—*Independent*.

**SABBATH HOURS. Thoughts.**—By LIEBMAN ADLER. 338 pp. \$1.25.

“Rabbi Adler was a man of strong and fertile mind, and his sermons are eminently readable.”—*Sunday-School Times*.

**SOME JEWISH WOMEN.**—By HENRY ZIRNDORF. 270 pp. \$1.25.

“The side-lights which this book casts upon rabbinic life and thought will attract readers.”—*Critic*.

**CHAPTERS ON JEWISH LITERATURE.**—By ISRAEL ABRAHAMS. 275 pp. \$1.25.

“The author has performed his task with admirable taste and judgment. He has written a primer of Jewish literature, it is true, an elementary manual, so to speak, but it is agreeably free from the faults of abruptness and fragmentariness so common to that class of booklets. . . . It is not a mere bibliography, nor is it a collection of names and works; but a sketch in outline, warmed by the author's sympathetic treatment and enriched by his suggestive genius.”—*Jewish Messenger*.

**A SKETCH OF JEWISH HISTORY.** BY GUSTAV KARPELES. 109 pp. Boards. 30 cents. (Special Series No. 5)

“Dr. Karpeles's standpoint is a sane one, and his intimate acquaintance with the details of his subject has in no degree confused his sketch of the general development.”—*Critic*.

**JEWISH LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES.**—By ISRAEL ABRAHAMS. 452 pp. \$1.75.

"Mr. Abrahams has really done a very good and useful piece of work. He has taken up one side of mediæval life, and given us the means of getting a thorough understanding of it."—*Bookman*.

**OLD EUROPEAN JEWRIES.**—By DAVID PHILIPSON. 281 pp. \$1.25.

"Philipson's book is a very valuable historical and ethnographical contribution."—GUSTAV KARPELES, *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*.

**THE TALMUD.**—By ARSÈNE DARMESTETER. Translated from the French by HENRIETTA SZOLD. Boards. 30 cents. (Special Series No. 4.)

"Few persons know what 'The Talmud' signifies. The booklet, with this title, . . . is *multum in parvo* on this theme. That stupendous library of rabbinic lore is here described with a fulness and a clearness not surpassed in many larger and more pretentious works."—*Dial*.

**THE TALMUD.**—Reprinted from the "Literary Remains" of EMANUEL DEUTSCH. Boards. 30 cents. (Special Series No. 3.)

"When first published . . . made its author, then one of the under-librarians at the British Museum, famous, and still remains an admirable short study."—*Atlantic Monthly*.

**READINGS AND RECITATIONS. For Jewish Homes and Schools.**—Compiled by ISABEL E. COHEN. 294 pp. \$1.25.

"This book should be found in every Jewish home; it should find its way into every Jewish Sabbath-school; for none will lay it aside without feeling that a religion which could intone such songs and inspire such bards has every claim upon the intelligent reverence of those in its household born."—EMIL G. HIRSCH, *Reform Advocate*.



**THE PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS IN RUSSIA.**

—87 pp. Paper. 25 cents. (Special Series No. 1.)

“The pamphlet is full of facts, and will inform people very fully in regard to the basis of the complaints made by the Jews against Russia.”—*Public Opinion*.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST CONVENTION  
OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH  
WOMEN** (New York, 1896). 426 pp. \$1.00.

“Among the many speeches recorded, we have found several of much more than ordinary power.”—*Public Opinion*.

**PAPERS OF THE JEWISH WOMEN'S CON-  
GRESS** (Chicago, 1893). 270 pp. \$1.00.

“This collection interprets the motive force which actuates the daughters of Israel under all life's circumstances, and it is certainly to the credit of the Jewish women of America that they should have been able to so effectually voice the sentiments and thoughts that pervade their sex.”—*Jewish World*, London.

**FICTION**

**SONS OF THE COVENANT.**—By SAMUEL GORDON.  
Illustrated. 500 pp. \$1.50.

“A charming story, attractive not alone for its healthful, invigorating tone, but an indefinable spiritual quality that stamps the author as full of promise.”—*Jewish Messenger*.

**UNDER THE EAGLE'S WING.**—By SARA MILLER.  
Illustrated. 229 pp. 75 cents.

“It is a story of the days of Maimonides. . . . The author is to be commended for her book, that abounds in stirring incidents and is written with considerable ability.”—*Jewish Messenger*.

**THEY THAT WALK IN DARKNESS.** Ghetto  
Tragedies.—By I. ZANGWILL. 486 pp. \$1.50. *Sold  
to Members only.*

“While the tragic issue of each of these remarkable stories is inevitable, they are illumined by flashes of fancy, satire, irony, and humor. No reader who is not blinded by prejudice will rise from the perusal of this engrossing volume without an enhanced sense of compassion for, and admiration of, the singular race of whose traits and temperament Mr Zangwill is perhaps the most gifted interpreter.”—*Spectator* London.

**LOST PRINCE ALMON.**—By LOUIS PENDLETON.  
Illustrated. 218 pp. 75 cents.

"It is a charmingly written story of the little Prince Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, whom the Prince Jehoiada had rescued from the clutches of Athaliah. . . . Our Sunday-school literature is so extremely poor that we hail this volume with particular delight, and we predict that it will soon be one of the most popular gift books for Jewish children."—*Jewish Voice*.

**DREAMERS OF THE GHETTO.**—By I. ZANGWILL.  
537 pp. \$1.50. *Sold to Members only.*

"With marvellous industry, and with no small amount of erudition, he has packed together into the scenes dealing with Uriel Acosta, Sabbatai Zevi, Spinoza, the Baal Shem, Maimon, Heine, Lassalle, and Beaconsfield, just those incidents and sayings of their careers which bring out most clearly their Jewish aspects."—JOSEPH JACOBS, *Bookman*.

**IN THE PALE.** Stories and Legends of the Russian Jews.—By HENRY ILIOWIZI. 367 pp. \$1.25.

"Henry Iliowizi . . . is a master of both humor and pathos, as is shown in his book of stories and legends entitled 'In the Pale.'"—*Sunday-School Times*.

**CHILDREN OF THE GHETTO.**—By I. ZANGWILL.  
2 vols. 451 pp., 325 pp. \$2.50.

"Nowhere else have been given us more realistic pictures of the shabbiness, the unwholesomeness, the close-packed human misery, the squalor, the vulgarity, the sharp struggle in the mean competition of life, in the East End of London. [But] there is a world of poetry, of dreams, of imagination, of high calling, of intellectual subtlety, even, in which sordid London, not Jewish, has no part nor lot."—CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER, *Harper's Magazine*.

**RABBI AND PRIEST.**—By MILTON GOLDSMITH. 314 pp. \$1.00.

"The author has attempted to depict faithfully the customs and practices of the Russian people and government in connection with the Jewish population of that country. The book is a strong and well-written story."—*Public Opinion*.

**THINK AND THANK.**—By S. W. COOPER. Illustrated. 120 pp. 50 cents.

“Sir Moses Montefiore is the hero of this story. . . . ‘Think and Thank’ will please boys, and it will be found popular in Sunday-school libraries.”—*New York Herald*.

**VOEGELE'S MARRIAGE AND OTHER TALES.**—  
By LOUIS SCHNABEL. 83 pp. Paper. 25 cents.  
(Special Series No. 2.)

“‘The False Turn’ is a charming little sketch, and the humor of it very delicate and amusing. ‘Voegele's Marriage’ I find also very artistic and interesting.”—EMMA LAZARUS.

**IDYLS OF THE GASS.**—By MARTHA WOLFENSTEIN.  
295 pp. \$1.25.

“Charming is, indeed, the word which one keeps repeating to oneself throughout. . . . It is not a novel, nor is it a set of short stories, but a blend of both, eked out even, *à la* Thackeray, with snatches of essays, in which the writer wears her heart upon her leaves. It is a whimsical, wayward, womanly book, saturated with the charm of the Ghetto life which Miss Wolfenstein loves best in the world.”—I. ZANGWILL, *Jewish Chronicle*, London.

---

---

**Publications Sent from the Society's Office Post-  
paid**

**FOR SALE BY THE TRADE**

**Special Terms to Schools and Libraries**

**THE JEWISH PUBLICATION SOCIETY  
OF AMERICA**

**1015 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa.**

The Society is the Sole Agent for the Publications of the  
American Jewish Historical Society

BEQUESTS, DONATIONS, AND LIFE MEMBERSHIP DUES (\$100) ARE PLACED IN THE PERMANENT FUND



FORM OF BEQUEST

I give, bequeath and devise to the Jewish Publication Society of America (*here add the nature and amount of the bequest*).....

.....

.....

.....

.....







